



Telecourse  
Reference  
Guide

# CPTN



## *California POST Television Network*

Kids in Peril:  
Missing Children Cases 2002

**KIDS IN PERIL:  
MISSING CHILDREN CASES 2002  
POST TELECOURSE REFERENCE GUIDE**

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## Preface

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Title 12, Violent Crime Information Center, was added to the Penal Code July 1, 1989. POST missing person guidelines were approved by the Commission and became effective January 1, 1989. The guidelines have been updated twice to reflect amendments in the laws relating to missing persons and are published in the POST document *Guidelines and Curriculum for Handling Missing Person and Runaway Cases - 2000*.

According to the Lost Children's Network, a child is reported missing every 37 seconds throughout the United States. Categories of cases involving these missing children include mental illness, runaways/throwaways, domestic violence cases, family and non-family abductions. In recent years, the Internet has allowed criminals access to large numbers of children, with an estimated 10 million children going online. By 2005 that number will grow to approximately 77 million. The challenge to law enforcement is great and requires specific knowledge and skills. The goals of this telecourse are to assist law enforcement in its mission to ensure officer and public safety, care for victims of crimes, model professional behavior, and protect rights of all people

Materials in this reference guide were largely compiled from information provided by subject matter experts chosen for their expertise in the program topic. There are extensive resources available to law enforcement on this topic and information is included on how to contact these organizations. The reference guide is not aligned to the telecourse program; it is rather a supplement of materials to complement the telecourse.



## Telecourse Segments

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The telecourse is divided into five segments as follows:

*Segment I:*        **Introduction/Non-Family Abductions**

- Telecourse goals
- Categories of Crimes Involving Missing Children
- First Responder Responsibilities
- Dealing with the Family
- Examples of High-profile Cases
- Other Possible Witnesses
- Computer Connections

*Segment II:*       **Family Abductions**

- Statistics and Trends
- Obstacles for Law Enforcement
- Interview
- Know the Abductor
- Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Act
- Recover Possibilities

*Segment III:*     **Runaways Using “Survival Sex”**

- Family Situations
- Sex Trade
- Examples of High-profile Cases
- Overall Legal Considerations

*Segment IV:*      **Law Enforcement Follow-up and Problems**

- Ethnic/cultural concerns
- Halfway Houses
- Available Resources

*Segment V:*       **Summary**



CALIFORNIA LAW

## TITLE 12. VIOLENT CRIME INFORMATION CENTER (California Penal Code Sections 14200-14213)

14200. The Attorney General shall establish and maintain the Violent Crime Information Center to assist in the identification and the apprehension of persons responsible for specific violent crimes and for the disappearance and exploitation of persons, particularly children and dependent adults. The center shall establish and maintain programs which include, but are not limited to, all of the following: developing violent offender profiles; assisting local law enforcement agencies and county district attorneys by providing investigative information on persons responsible for specific violent crimes and missing person cases; providing physical description information and photographs, if available, of missing persons to county district attorneys, nonprofit missing persons organizations, and schools; and providing statistics on missing dependent adults and on missing children, including, as may be applicable, family abductions, nonfamily abductions, voluntary missing, and lost children or lost dependent adults.

14201. (a) The Attorney General shall establish within the center and shall maintain an online, automated computer system designed to effect an immediate law enforcement response to reports of missing persons. The Attorney General shall design the computer system, using any existing system, including the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System, to include an active file of information concerning persons reported to it as missing and who have not been reported as found. The computer system shall also include a confidential historic data base. The Attorney General shall develop a system of cataloging missing person reports according to a variety of characteristics in order to facilitate locating particular categories of reports as needed.

(b) The Attorney General's active files described in subdivision (a) shall be made available to law enforcement agencies. The Attorney General shall provide to these agencies the name and personal description data of the missing person including, but not limited to, the person's date of birth, color of eyes and hair, sex, height, weight, and race, the time and date he or she was reported missing, the reporting agency, and any other data pertinent to the purpose of locating missing persons. However, the Attorney General shall not release the information if the reporting agency requests the Attorney General in writing not to release the information because it would impair a criminal investigation.

(c) The Attorney General shall distribute a missing children and dependent adults bulletin on a quarterly basis to local law enforcement agencies, district attorneys, and public schools. The Attorney General shall also make this information accessible to other parties involved in efforts to locate missing children and dependent adults and to those other persons as the Attorney General deems appropriate.

This section shall become operative on July 1, 1989.

14201.1. The Attorney General shall establish and maintain, upon appropriation of funds by the Legislature, the Violent Crime Information Network within the center to enable the Department of Justice crime analysts with expertise in child abuse, missing persons, child abductions, and sexual assaults to electronically share their data, analysis, and findings on violent crime cases with each other, and to electronically provide law enforcement agencies with information to assist in the identification, tracking, and apprehension of violent offenders. The Violent Crime Information Network shall serve to integrate existing state, federal, and civilian data bases into a single comprehensive network.

14201.5. (a) The Attorney General shall establish within the Department of Justice the Missing and Exploited Children's Recovery Network by July 31, 1995.

(b) This network shall consist of an automated computerized system that shall have the capability to electronically transmit to all state and local law enforcement agencies, and all cooperating news media services, either by facsimile or computer modem, a missing child poster that includes the name, personal description data, and picture of the missing child. The information contained in this poster shall include, but not be limited to, the child's date of birth, color of eyes and hair, sex, height, weight, race, the time and date he or she was reported missing, the reporting agency, including contact person at reporting agency if known, and any other data pertinent to the purpose of locating missing persons.

(c) The Department of Justice shall work in cooperation with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to develop and implement a network that can electronically interface with the National Missing and Exploited Children's Network.

(d) The Attorney General shall implement this network within existing Department of Justice resources.

14201.6. (a) The Department of Justice shall establish and maintain a publicly accessible computer internet directory of information relating to the following:

(1) Persons for whom an arrest warrant has been issued pursuant to an alleged violation of any offense defined as a violent felony in subdivision (c) of Section 667.5.

(2) Critical missing children.

(3) Unsolved homicides.

(b) The Attorney General may determine the extent of information and the priority of cases to be included in the directory.

(c) The department shall keep confidential, and not enter into the directory, either of the following:

(1) Information regarding any case for which the Attorney General has determined that disclosure pursuant to this section would endanger the safety of a person involved in an investigation or the successful completion of the investigation or a related investigation.

(2) Information regarding an arrest warrant for which the issuing magistrate has determined that disclosure pursuant to this section would endanger the safety of a



person involved in an investigation or the successful completion of the investigation or a related investigation.

(d) For purposes of this section, "critical missing child" includes, but is not limited to, any case of a missing child for which there is evidence or indications that the child is at risk, as specified in subdivision (b) of Section 14213.

14202. (a) The Attorney General shall establish and maintain within the center an investigative support unit and an automated violent crime method of operation system to facilitate the identification and apprehension of persons responsible for murder, kidnap, including parental abduction, false imprisonment, or sexual assault. This unit shall be responsible for identifying perpetrators of violent felonies collected from the center and analyzing and comparing data on missing persons in order to determine possible leads which could assist local law enforcement agencies. This unit shall only release information about active investigations by police and sheriffs' departments to local law enforcement agencies.

(b) The Attorney General shall make available to the investigative support unit files organized by category of offender or victim and shall seek information from other files as needed by the unit. This set of files may include, among others, the following:

(1) Missing or unidentified, deceased persons dental files filed pursuant to this title or Section 102870 of the Health and Safety Code.

(2) Child abuse reports filed pursuant to Section 11169.

(3) Sex offender registration files maintained pursuant to Section 290.

(4) State summary criminal history information maintained pursuant to Section 11105.

(5) Information obtained pursuant to the parent locator service maintained pursuant to Section 11478.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

(6) Information furnished to the Department of Justice pursuant to Section 11107.

(7) Other Attorney General's office files as requested by the investigative support unit.

This section shall become operative on July 1, 1989.

14202.1. The Attorney General shall establish and maintain, upon appropriation of funds by the Legislature, within the center the Violent Crime Information System to track and monitor violent offenders and their activities. The Violent Crime Information System shall use computer technology to compare unsolved crime scene and methods of operation information against the file of known violent sexual assault, kidnapping, and homicide offenders, containing over 40,000 violent, kidnapping, and homicide offenders. The system shall provide local law enforcement agencies with investigative leads to assist in the resolution of violent crimes.

14202.2. The Department of Justice, in conjunction with the Department of

Corrections, shall update any supervised release file that is available to law enforcement on the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System every 10 days to reflect the most recent inmates paroled from facilities under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections.

14203. (a) The online missing persons registry shall accept and generate complete information on a missing person.

(b) The information on a missing person shall be retrievable by any of the following:

- (1) The person's name.
  - (2) The person's date of birth.
  - (3) The person's social security number.
  - (4) Whether a dental chart has been received, coded, and entered into the National Crime Information Center Missing Person System by the Attorney General.
  - (5) The person's physical description, including hair and eye color and body marks.
  - (6) The person's known associates.
  - (7) The person's last known location.
  - (8) The name or assumed name of the abductor, if applicable, other pertinent information relating to the abductor or the assumed abductor, or both.
  - (9) Any other information, as deemed appropriate by the Attorney General.
- (c) The Attorney General, in consultation with local law enforcement agencies and other user groups, shall develop the form in which information shall be entered into the system.
- (d) The Attorney General shall establish and maintain within the center a separate, confidential historic data base relating to missing children and dependent adults. The historic data base may be used only by the center for statistical and research purposes. The historic data base shall be set up to categorize cases relating to missing children and dependent adults by type. These types shall include the following: runaways, voluntary missing, lost, abduction involving movement of the victim in the commission of the crime or sexual exploitation of the victim, nonfamily abduction, family abduction, and any other categories as determined by the Attorney General. In addition, the data shall include the number of missing children and missing dependent adults in this state and the category of each case.

(e) The center may supply information about specific cases from the historic data base to a local police department, sheriff's department, or district attorney, only in connection with an investigation by the police department, sheriff's department, or district attorney of a missing person case or a sex crime as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 11105.3.

This section shall become operative on July 1, 1989.

14204. The Attorney General shall provide training on the services provided by the

center to line personnel, supervisors, and investigators in the following fields: law enforcement, district attorneys' offices, California Youth Authority, the Department of Corrections, including the Parole and Community Services Unit, probation departments, court mediation services, and the judiciary. The Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training shall provide for the presentation of training to peace officers which will enable them to more efficiently handle, on the local level, the tracing of missing persons and victims of violent crimes.

This section shall become operative on July 1, 1989.

14205. (a) All local police and sheriffs' departments shall accept any report, including any telephonic report, of a missing person, including runaways, without delay and shall give priority to the handling of these reports over the handling of reports relating to crimes involving property. In cases where the person making a report of a missing person or runaway, contacts, including by telephone, the California Highway Patrol, the California Highway Patrol may take the report, and shall immediately advise the person making the report of the name and telephone number of the police or sheriff's department having jurisdiction of the residence address of the missing person and of the name and telephone number of the police or sheriff's department having jurisdiction of the place where the person was last seen. In cases of reports involving missing persons, including, but not limited to, runaways, the local police or sheriff's department shall immediately take the report and make an assessment of reasonable steps to be taken to locate the person. If the missing person is under 16 years of age, or there is evidence that the person is at risk, the department shall broadcast a "Be On the Look-Out" bulletin, without delay, within its jurisdiction.

(b) If the person reported missing is under 16 years of age, or if there is evidence that the person is at risk, the local police, sheriff's department, or the California Highway Patrol shall submit the report to the Attorney General's office within four hours after accepting the report. After the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System online missing person registry becomes operational, the reports shall be submitted, within four hours after accepting the report, to the Attorney General's office through the use of the California Telecommunications System.

(c) In cases where the report is taken by a department, other than that of the city or county of residence of the missing person or runaway, the department, or division of the California Highway Patrol taking the report shall, without delay, and, in the case of children under 16 years of age or where there was evidence that the missing person was at risk, within no more than 24 hours, notify, and forward a copy of the report to the police or sheriff's department or departments having jurisdiction of the residence address of the missing person or runaway and of the place where the person was last seen. The report shall also be submitted by the department or division of the California Highway Patrol which took the report to the center.

(d) The requirements imposed by this section on local police and sheriff's departments shall not be operative if the governing body of that local agency, by a majority vote of the members of that body, adopts a resolution expressly making those requirements inoperative.

14206. (a) (1) When any person makes a report of a missing person to a police department, sheriff's department, district attorney's office, California Highway Patrol, or other law enforcement agency, the report shall be given in person or by mail in a format acceptable to the Attorney General. That form shall include a statement authorizing the release of the dental or skeletal X-rays, or both, of the person reported missing and authorizing the release of a recent photograph of a person reported missing who is under 18 years of age. Included with the form shall be instructions which state that if the person reported missing is still missing 30 days after the report is made, the release form signed by a member of the family or next of kin of the missing person shall be taken by the family member or next of kin to the dentist, physician and surgeon, or medical facility in order to obtain the release of the dental or skeletal X-rays, or both, of that person or may be taken by a peace officer, if others fail to take action, to secure those X-rays. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, dental or skeletal X-rays, or both, shall be released by the dentist, physician and surgeon, or medical facility to the person presenting the request and shall be submitted within 10 days by that person to the police or sheriff's department or other law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the investigation. When the person reported missing has not been found within 30 days and no family or next of kin exists or can be located, the law enforcement agency may execute a written declaration, stating that an active investigation seeking the location of the missing person is being conducted, and that the dental or skeletal X-rays, or both, are necessary for the exclusive purpose of furthering the investigation. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the written declaration, signed by a peace officer, is sufficient authority for the dentist, physician and surgeon, or medical facility to release the missing person's dental or skeletal X-rays, or both.

(2) The form provided under this subdivision shall also state that if the person reported missing is under 18 years of age, the completed form shall be taken to the dentist, physician and surgeon, or medical facility immediately when the law enforcement agency determines that the disappearance involves evidence that the person is at risk or when the law enforcement agency determines that the person missing is under 16 years of age and has been missing at least 14 days. The form shall further provide that the dental or skeletal X-rays, or both, and a recent photograph of the missing child shall be submitted immediately to the law enforcement agency. Whenever authorized under this subdivision to execute a written declaration to obtain the release of dental or skeletal X-rays, or both, is provided, the investigating law enforcement agency may obtain those X-rays when a person reported missing is under 18 years of age and the law enforcement agency determines that the disappearance involves evidence that the person is at

risk. In each case, the law enforcement agency may confer immediately with the coroner or medical examiners and may submit its report including the dental or skeletal X-rays, or both, within 24 hours thereafter to the Attorney General. The Attorney General's office shall code and enter the dental or skeletal X-rays, or both, into the center.

(b) When a person reported missing has not been found within 45 days, the sheriff, chief of police, or other law enforcement agency conducting the investigation for the missing person may confer with the coroner or medical examiner prior to the preparation of a missing person report. The coroner or medical examiner shall cooperate with the law enforcement agency. After conferring with the coroner or medical examiner, the sheriff, chief of police, or other law enforcement agency initiating and conducting the investigation for the missing person may submit a missing person report and the dental or skeletal X-rays, or both, and photograph received pursuant to subdivision (a) to the Attorney General's office in a format acceptable to the Attorney General.

(c) Nothing in this section prohibits a parent or guardian of a child, reported to a law enforcement agency as missing, from voluntarily submitting fingerprints, and other documents, to the law enforcement agency accepting the report for inclusion in the report which is submitted to the Attorney General.

(d) The requirements imposed by this section on local police and sheriff's departments shall not be operative if the governing body of that local agency, by a majority vote of the members of that body, adopts a resolution expressly making those requirements inoperative.

14207. (a) When a person reported missing has been found, the sheriff, chief of police, coroner or medical examiner, or the law enforcement agency locating the missing person shall immediately report that information to the Attorney General's office.

(b) When a child under 12 years of age or a missing person, where there was evidence that the person was at risk, is found, the report indicating that the person is found shall be made not later than 24 hours after the person is found. A report shall also be made to the law enforcement agency that made the initial missing person report. The Attorney General's office shall then notify the National Crime Information Center that the missing person has been found.

(c) In the event that a missing person is found alive or dead in less than 24 hours and the local police or sheriff's department has reason to believe that the person had been abducted, the department shall submit a report to the center in a format established by the Attorney General. In the event that a missing person has been found before he or she has been reported missing to the center, the information related to the incident shall be submitted to the center.

14208. (a) The Department of Justice shall operate a statewide, toll-free telephone hotline 24 hours per day, seven days per week to receive information regarding missing children and dependent adults and relay this information to the appropriate

law enforcement authorities.

(b) The Department of Justice shall select up to six children per month from the missing children registry maintained pursuant to former Section 11114 or pursuant to the system maintained pursuant to Sections 14201 and 14202 and shall produce posters with photographs and information regarding these children, including the missing children hotline telephone number and reward information. The department shall make these posters available to parties as prescribed and as the department deems appropriate.

14209. (a) The Department of Justice shall provide appropriate local reporting agencies with a list of persons still listed as missing who are under 18 years of age, with an appropriate waiver form in order to assist the reporting agency in obtaining a photograph of each of the missing children.

(b) Local reporting agencies shall attempt to obtain the most recent photograph available for persons still listed as missing and forward those photographs to the Department of Justice.

(c) The department shall include these photographs, as they become available, in the quarterly bulletins pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 14201.

(d) State and local elected officials, agencies, departments, boards, and commissions may enclose in their mailings information regarding missing children or dependent adults obtainable from the Department of Justice or any organization that is recognized as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization under state or federal law and that has an ongoing missing children program. Elected officials, agency secretaries, and directors of departments, boards, and commissions are urged to develop policies to enclose missing children or dependent adults information in mailings when it will not increase postage costs, and is otherwise deemed appropriate.

14210. (a) The Legislature finds and declares that it is the duty of all law enforcement agencies to immediately assist any person who is attempting to make a report of a missing person or runaway.

(b) The Department of the California Highway Patrol shall continue to implement the written policy, required to be developed and adopted pursuant to former Section 11114.3, for the coordination of each of its divisions with the police and sheriffs' departments located within each division in taking, transmitting, and investigating reports of missing persons, including runaways.

(c) The Department of the California Highway Patrol shall report to the Legislature on or before June 30, 1989, regarding the experience under, and the effects of, subdivision (b).

14213. (a) As used in this title, "missing person" includes, but is not limited to, a child who has been taken, detained, concealed, enticed away, or retained by a parent in violation of Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 277) of Title 9 of Part 1. It also includes any child who is missing voluntarily or involuntarily, or under

circumstances not conforming to his or her ordinary habits or behavior and who may be in need of assistance.

(b) As used in this title, "evidence that the person is at risk" includes, but is not limited to, evidence or indications of any of the following:

- (1) The person missing is the victim of a crime or foul play.
- (2) The person missing is in need of medical attention.
- (3) The person missing has no pattern of running away or disappearing.
- (4) The person missing may be the victim of parental abduction.
- (5) The person missing is mentally impaired.

(c) As used in this title, "child" is any person under the age of 18.

(d) As used in this title, "center" means the Violent Crime Information Center.

(e) As used in this title, "dependent adult" is any person described in subdivision (e) of Section 368.

(f) As used in this title, "dental or medical records or X-rays," include all those records or X-rays which are in the possession of a dentist, physician and surgeon, or medical facility.

## CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE SECTIONS 38139 AND 49068.6

38139. (a) Public primary schools shall post at an appropriate area restricted to adults information regarding missing children provided by the Department of Justice pursuant to Section 14208 of the Penal Code.

(b) Public secondary schools shall post at an appropriate area information regarding missing children provided by the Department of Justice pursuant to Section 14208 of the Penal Code.

49068.6 (a) Any law enforcement agency responsible for the investigation of a missing child shall inform the school district, other local educational agency, or private school, in which the child is enrolled, that the child is missing. The notice shall be in writing, shall include a photograph of the child if a photograph is available, and shall be given within 10 days of the child's disappearance.

(b) Every school notified pursuant to this section shall place a notice that the child has been reported missing on the front of each missing child's school record. For public schools this shall be in addition to the posting requirements set forth in Section 38139.

(c) Local law enforcement agencies may establish a process for informing local schools about abducted children pursuant to this section.

(d) If a school receives a record inquiry or request from any person or entity for a missing child about whom the school has been notified pursuant to this section, the school shall immediately notify the law enforcement authorities who informed the school of the missing child's status.



## CALIFORNIA PENAL CODE SECTIONS 277, 278, 278.5, 278.6

277. The following definitions apply for the purposes of this chapter:

- (a) "Child" means a person under the age of 18 years.
- (b) "Court order" or "custody order" means a custody determination decree, judgment, or order issued by a court of competent jurisdiction, whether permanent or temporary, initial or modified, that affects the custody or visitation of a child, issued in the context of a custody proceeding. An order, once made, shall continue in effect until it expires, is modified, is rescinded, or terminates by operation of law.
- (c) "Custody proceeding" means a proceeding in which a custody determination is an issue, including, but not limited to, an action for dissolution or separation, dependency, guardianship, termination of parental rights, adoption, paternity, except actions under Section 11350 or 11350.1 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, or protection from domestic violence proceedings, including an emergency protective order pursuant to Part 3 (commencing with Section 6240) of Division 10 of the Family Code.
- (d) "Lawful custodian" means a person, guardian, or public agency having a right to custody of a child.
- (e) A "right to custody" means the right to the physical care, custody, and control of a child pursuant to a custody order as defined in subdivision (b) or, in the absence of a court order, by operation of law, or pursuant to the Uniform Parentage Act contained in Part 3 (commencing with Section 7600) of Division 12 of the Family Code. Whenever a public agency takes protective custody or jurisdiction of the care, custody, control, or conduct of a child by statutory authority or court order, that agency is a lawful custodian of the child and has a right to physical custody of the child. In any subsequent placement of the child, the public agency continues to be a lawful custodian with a right to physical custody of the child until the public agency's right of custody is terminated by an order of a court of competent jurisdiction or by operation of law.
- (f) In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a parent loses his or her right to custody of the child to the other parent if the parent having the right to custody is dead, is unable or refuses to take the custody, or has abandoned his or her family. A natural parent whose parental rights have been terminated by court order is no longer a lawful custodian and no longer has a right to physical custody.
- (g) "Keeps" or "withholds" means retains physical possession of a child whether or not the child resists or objects.
- (h) "Visitation" means the time for access to the child allotted to any person by court order.
- (i) "Person" includes, but is not limited to, a parent or an agent of a parent.
- (j) "Domestic violence" means domestic violence as defined in Section 6211 of the Family Code.
- (k) "Abduct" means take, entice away, keep, withhold, or conceal.

278. Every person, not having a right to custody, who maliciously takes, entices away, keeps, withholds, or conceals any child with the intent to detain or conceal that child from a lawful custodian shall be punished by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding one year, a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or both that fine and imprisonment, or by imprisonment in the state prison for two, three, or four years, a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), or both that fine and imprisonment.

278.5. (a) Every person who takes, entices away, keeps, withholds, or conceals a child and maliciously deprives a lawful custodian of a right to custody, or a person of a right to visitation, shall be punished by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding one year, a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or both that fine and imprisonment, or by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months, or two or three years, a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), or both that fine and imprisonment.

(b) Nothing contained in this section limits the court's contempt power.

(c) A custody order obtained after the taking, enticing away, keeping, withholding, or concealing of a child does not constitute a defense to a crime charged under this section.

278.6. (a) At the sentencing hearing following a conviction for a violation of Section 278 or 278.5, or both, the court shall consider any relevant factors and circumstances in aggravation, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

- (1) The child was exposed to a substantial risk of physical injury or illness.
- (2) The defendant inflicted or threatened to inflict physical harm on a parent or lawful custodian of the child or on the child at the time of or during the abduction.
- (3) The defendant harmed or abandoned the child during the abduction.
- (4) The child was taken, enticed away, kept, withheld, or concealed outside the United States.
- (5) The child has not been returned to the lawful custodian.
- (6) The defendant previously abducted or threatened to abduct the child.
- (7) The defendant substantially altered the appearance or the name of the child.
- (8) The defendant denied the child appropriate education during the abduction.
- (9) The length of the abduction.
- (10) The age of the child.

(b) At the sentencing hearing following a conviction for a violation of Section 278 or 278.5, or both, the court shall consider any relevant factors and circumstances in mitigation, including, but not limited to, both of the following:

- (1) The defendant returned the child unharmed and prior to arrest or issuance of a warrant for arrest, whichever is first.
- (2) The defendant provided information and assistance leading to the child's safe return.

(c) In addition to any other penalties provided for a violation of Section 278 or

278.5, a court shall order the defendant to pay restitution to the district attorney for any costs incurred in locating and returning the child as provided in Section 3134 of the Family Code, and to the victim for those expenses and costs reasonably incurred by, or on behalf of, the victim in locating and recovering the child. An award made pursuant to this section shall constitute a final judgment and shall be enforceable as such.

## Section 14250 of Title 12.5 of the Penal Code

14250. (a) (1) The Department of Justice shall develop a DNA data base for all cases involving the report of an unidentified deceased person or a high-risk missing person.

(2) The data base required in paragraph (1) shall be comprised of DNA data from genetic markers that are appropriate for human identification, but have no capability to predict biological function other than gender. These markers shall be selected by the department and may change as the technology for DNA typing progresses. The results of DNA typing shall be compatible with and uploaded into the CODIS DNA data base established by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The sole purpose of this data base shall be to identify missing persons and shall be kept separate from the data base established under Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 295) of Title 9 of Part 1.

(3) The Department of Justice shall compare DNA samples taken from the remains of unidentified deceased persons with DNA samples taken from personal articles belonging to the missing person, or from the parents or appropriate relatives of high-risk missing persons.

(4) For the purpose of this data base, "high-risk missing person" means a person missing as a result of a stranger abduction, a person missing under suspicious circumstances, a person missing under unknown circumstances, or where there is reason to assume that the person is in danger, or deceased, and that person has been missing more than 30 days, or less than 30 days in the discretion of the investigating agency.

(b) The department shall develop standards and guidelines for the preservation and storage of DNA samples. Any agency that is required to collect samples from unidentified remains for DNA testing shall follow these standards and guidelines. These guidelines shall address all scientific methods used for the identification of remains, including DNA, anthropology, odontology, and fingerprints.

(c) (1) A coroner shall collect samples for DNA testing from the remains of all unidentified persons and shall send those samples to the Department of Justice for DNA testing and inclusion in the DNA data bank. After the department has taken a sample from the remains for DNA analysis and analyzed it, the remaining evidence shall be returned to the appropriate local coroner.

(2) After a report has been made of a person missing under high-risk circumstances, the responsible investigating law enforcement agency shall inform

the parents or other appropriate relatives that they may give a voluntary sample for DNA testing or may collect a DNA sample from a personal article belonging to the missing person if available. The samples shall be taken by the appropriate law enforcement agency in a manner prescribed by the Department of Justice. The responsible investigating law enforcement agency shall wait no longer than 30 days after a report has been made to inform the parents or other relatives of their right to give a sample.

(3) The Department of Justice shall develop a standard release form that authorizes a mother, father, or other relative to voluntarily provide the sample. The release shall explain that DNA is to be used only for the purpose of identifying the missing person and that the DNA sample and profile will be destroyed upon request. No incentive or coercion shall be used to compel a parent or relative to provide a sample.

(4) The Department of Justice shall develop a model kit that law enforcement shall use when taking samples from parents and relatives.

(5) Before submitting the sample to the department for analysis, law enforcement shall reverify the status of the missing person. After 30 days has elapsed from the date the report was filed, law enforcement shall send the sample to the department for DNA testing and inclusion in the DNA data base, with a copy of the crime report, and any supplemental information.

(6) All retained samples and DNA extracted from a living person, and profiles developed therefrom, shall be used solely for the purpose of identification of the deceased's remains. All samples and DNA extracted from a living person, and profiles developed therefrom, shall be destroyed after a positive identification with the deceased's remains is made and a report is issued, unless any of the following has occurred:

(A) The coroner has made a report to a law enforcement agency pursuant to Section 27491.1 of the Government Code, that he or she has a reasonable ground to suspect that the identified person's death has been occasioned by another by criminal means.

(B) A law enforcement agency makes a determination that the identified person's death has been occasioned by another by criminal means.

(C) The evidence is needed in an active criminal investigation to determine whether the identified person's death has been occasioned by another by criminal means.

(D) A governmental entity is required to retain the material pursuant to Section 1417.9.

(7) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section, upon the request of any living person who submits his or her DNA sample and profile pursuant to this section, including the parent or guardian of a child who submits a DNA sample of the child, the DNA sample shall be removed from the DNA data base.

(d) All DNA samples and profiles developed therefrom shall be confidential and shall only be disclosed to personnel of the Department of Justice, law enforcement officers, coroners, medical examiners, district attorneys, and persons who need access to a DNA sample for purposes of the prosecution or defense of a criminal case, except that a law enforcement officer or agency may publicly disclose the fact of a DNA profile match after taking reasonable measures to first notify the family of an unidentified deceased person or the family of a high-risk missing person that there has been an identification.

(e) All DNA, forensic identification profiles, and other identification information retained by the Department of Justice pursuant to this section are exempt from any law requiring disclosure of information to the public.

(f) (1) Any person who knowingly discloses DNA or other forensic identification information developed pursuant to this section to an unauthorized individual or agency, or for any purpose other than for identification or for use in a criminal investigation, prosecution, or defense, is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(2) A person who collects, processes, or stores DNA or DNA samples from a living person that are used for DNA testing pursuant to this section who does either of the following is liable in civil damages to the donor of the DNA in the amount of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for each violation, plus attorney's fees and costs:

(A) Fails to destroy samples or DNA extracted from a living person pursuant to paragraph (6) of subdivision (c).

(B) Discloses DNA samples in violation of subdivision (d).

(g) (1) If a disclosure or failure to destroy samples described in paragraph (2) of subdivision (f) is made by an employee of the Department of Justice, the department shall be liable for those actions of its employee.

(2) Notwithstanding any other law, the remedy in this section shall be the sole and exclusive remedy against the department and its employees available to the donor of the DNA against the department and its employees.

(3) The department employee disclosing DNA or other forensic identification information or otherwise violating this section shall be absolutely immune from civil liability under this or any other law.

(h) It is not an unauthorized disclosure or violation of this section to release DNA and other forensic identification information as part of a judicial or administrative proceeding, to a jury or grand jury, or in a document filed with a court or administrative agency, or for this information to become part of the public transcript or record of proceedings.

(i) In order to maintain computer system security, the computer software and data base structures used by the DNA laboratory of the Department of Justice to implement this chapter are confidential.

**FORMS**

Declaration of Authority for Seizure of Dental/Medical Records  
DOJ Missing Person Reporting Form  
Authorization to Release Dental/Skeletal X-rays of Missing Juvenile

# DECLARATION OF AUTHORITY FOR SEIZURE OF DENTAL/MEDICAL RECORDS

Missing Person's Name

Case Number

I hereby declare that the above mentioned person has been reported missing and that no family or next of kin exists or can be located.

There is presently an active investigation being conducted seeking the location of the missing person, and dental/medical X-rays, charts and records are necessary for the exclusive purpose of furthering the investigation.

These records are hereby requested to be produced by:

Dr.

Address

City

Telephone

This form, signed by a peace officer, is sufficient authority for the dentist/doctor to release the missing person's records pursuant to the express provisions of Section 14206 of the California Penal Code.

Signed

A duly sworn peace officer

Dated

(SAMPLE FORM)



# MISSING PERSON REPORTING FORM

(See Reverse for Instructions)

DOJ USE ONLY MKE: \_\_\_\_\_ LSC: \_\_\_\_\_ CAT: \_\_\_\_\_

## 5) RECORD TYPE

(Check type which best describes)

- ☐ Runaway Juvenile
- ☐ Voluntary Missing Adult
- ☐ Parental/Family Abduction
- ☐ Non-Family Abduction
- ☐ Stranger Abduction
- ☐ Dependent Adult
- ☐ Lost
- ☐ Catastrophe
- ☐ Unknown Circumstances

1) Check One: ☐ ADULT ☐ JUVENILE 2) Case # \_\_\_\_\_

3) Reporting Agency \_\_\_\_\_ 4) ORI # \_\_\_\_\_

6) FCN # \_\_\_\_\_ 7) NIC # M

8) CATEGORY: ☐ At Risk ☐ Prior Missing ☐ Sexual Exploitation Suspected

9) Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time Missing \_\_\_\_\_

10) Alias 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Alias 2 \_\_\_\_\_

11) GENDER	12) RACE	13) HGT.	14) WGT.	15) EYE COLOR	16) HAIR COLOR/LENGTH	17) DATE OF BIRTH
<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/> W <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> J <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> I <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> X			<input type="checkbox"/> BLK <input type="checkbox"/> HAZ <input type="checkbox"/> BLU <input type="checkbox"/> MAR <input type="checkbox"/> BRO <input type="checkbox"/> PNK <input type="checkbox"/> GRY <input type="checkbox"/> MUL <input type="checkbox"/> GRN <input type="checkbox"/> XXX	<input type="checkbox"/> BLK <input type="checkbox"/> RED <input type="checkbox"/> BLN <input type="checkbox"/> SDY <input type="checkbox"/> BRO <input type="checkbox"/> WHY <input type="checkbox"/> GRY <input type="checkbox"/> XXX Length _____	

18) Residence Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

19) Location Last Seen \_\_\_\_\_ Probable Destination \_\_\_\_\_

20) Known Associates \_\_\_\_\_

21) Mental Condition \_\_\_\_\_

22) SS # \_\_\_\_\_ CII# \_\_\_\_\_ FBI # \_\_\_\_\_ DL # \_\_\_\_\_

23) Photo Available: ☐ Yes ☐ No Age in Photo \_\_\_\_\_ Photo/X-Ray Waiver Release Signed ☐ Yes ☐ No  
(Attach Photo and Signed SS 8567 Waiver Release Form)

24) Scars/Marks/Tattoos (locate/describe) \_\_\_\_\_

25) Skeletal X-Rays Available: ☐ Yes ☐ No; Broken Bones/Missing Organs: \_\_\_\_\_

26) Dental X-Rays Available: ☐ Yes ☐ No; (Attach Chart and X-Rays) Dentures: ☐ Upper ☐ Lower  
☐ Full ☐ Partial

27) Visible Dental Work \_\_\_\_\_

28) Dentist's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

29) Glasses ☐ Contact Lens ☐ Clothing Description/Size \_\_\_\_\_

30) Jewelry Description \_\_\_\_\_

31) If Vehicle Involved: ☐ S ☐ MP Lic# \_\_\_\_\_ Make \_\_\_\_\_ Model \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

32) If abduction, did abduction involve movement of missing person in the commission of a crime? ☐ Yes ☐ No

33) Suspect Name \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_

34) Relationship to Victim \_\_\_\_\_ Warrant # \_\_\_\_\_

35) Reporting Party \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

36) Relationship to Missing Person \_\_\_\_\_ Date Reported \_\_\_\_\_

37) Additional Information \_\_\_\_\_

38) Reporting Officer/Agency Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Upon completion, please return to:

Department of Justice  
Bureau of Criminal Identification and Information  
P.O. Box 903387  
Sacramento, California 94203-3870  
Attention: Missing/Unidentified Persons Unit

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING FORM SS 8568

- 1) **ADULT** - missing person (MP) is 18 years and older  
**JUVENILE** - missing person is under 18 years old at time of report
- 2) **CASE #** - reporting agency case number
- 3) **REPORTING AGENCY** - reporting agency name
- 4) **ORI** - originating agency identifier - i.e., CA034945400
- 5) **RECORD TYPE** - check type which best describes MP case  
**RUNAWAY JUVENILE** - missing juvenile (MJ) that has left home without the knowledge/permission of parents or guardian  
**VOLUNTARY MISSING ADULT** - missing adult (MA) who has left of his/her own free will  
**PARENTAL/FAMILY ABDUCTION** - MJ taken by a parent/non-parental family member  
**NON-FAMILY ABDUCTION** - MJ taken by a known abductor, but not a family member  
**STRANGER ABDUCTION** - MJ taken by a stranger or missing under circumstances that may indicate a stranger abduction  
**DEPENDENT ADULT** - MA who is between the ages of 18 and 64 who has physical or mental limitation which restricts his or her ability to carry out normal activities (i.e., Alzheimer, mentally handicapped)  
**LOST** - any person who has strayed away or whose whereabouts are unknown  
**CATASTROPHE** - any person who is missing after a catastrophe (i.e., plane crash, boating accident, fire, flood)  
**UNKNOWN CIRCUMSTANCES** - when circumstances surrounding MP's disappearance are unknown
- 6) **FCN** - Missing/Unidentified Person System Record File Control Number.
- 7) **NCIC #** - National Crime Information Center Record ID number
- 8) **CATEGORY**: check all that apply  
**AT RISK** - At risk includes, but is not limited to, evidence or indications the MP is/has
  - a) the victim of a crime or foul play
  - b) in need of medical attention
  - c) no pattern of running away or disappearing
  - d) the victim of a parental abduction
  - e) mentally impaired**PRIOR MISSING** - MP has been reported missing prior to this occurrence  
**SEXUAL EXPLOITATION SUSPECTED** - sexual exploitation/abuse of the MP is suspected
- 9) **NAME** - full name of MP - last, first, middle  
**DATE/TIME MISSING** - date and time MP was last seen
- 10) **ALIAS** - alias name of MP, if any; list additional AKA's under item #37
- 11) **GENDER** - MP's sex - check one
- 12) **RACE** - MP's race-check one  
 W - White      J - Japanese      H - Hispanic/Mexican/Latin  
 F - Filipino      B - Black      O - All Other/Multi-Race  
 C - Chinese      I - American Indian/Alaskan Native  
 X - Unknown
- 13) **HGT** - MP's height in feet and inches
- 14) **WGT** - MP's weight in pounds (i.e., 130)
- 15) **EYE** - MP's eye color - check one  
 BLK - Black      HAZ - Hazel      BLU - Blue  
 MAR - Maroon      BRO - Brown      PNK - Pink  
 GRY - Gray      MUL - Multi-color      GRN - Green  
 XXX - Unknown
- 16) **HAIR COLOR/LENGTH** - MP's hair color-check one & length  
 Specify short, medium, long or actual length.  
 BLK - Black      RED - Red/Auburn      BLN - Blond/Strawberry  
 SDY - Sandy      BRO - Brown      WHI - White  
 GRY - Gray      XXX - Unknown
- 17) **DATE OF BIRTH (AGE IF UNKNOWN)** - MP's date of birth or age if date of birth is unknown
- 18) **RESIDENCE ADDRESS** - MP's residence address  
**CITY** - MP's residence city
- 19) **LOCATION LAST SEEN** - location where MP was last seen  
**PROBABLE DESTINATION** - probable destination of MP
- 20) **KNOWN ASSOCIATES** - any known associates of MP who may have knowledge where the MP is or who may be accompanying the MP
- 21) **MENTAL CONDITION** - list any mental conditions the MP may have, i.e., stable, suicidal, depressed
- 22) **SS #** - MP's Social Security Number  
**CII #** - MP's California State Identification Number  
**FBI #** - MP's Federal Bureau of Investigation Number  
**DL #** - MP's Drivers License Number-indicate state of issue
- 23) **PHOTO AVAILABLE** - indicate whether a photo of the MP has been received by reporting agency  
**AGE IN PHOTO** - age of MP at time photo was taken  
**PHOTO/X-RAY WAIVER RELEASE SIGNED** - indicate whether a Photo/X-Ray Waiver Release Form (SS 8567) has been signed by reporting party, attach photo and signed form SS 8567 to the back of the MP Reporting Form (SS 8568)
- 24) **SCARS/MARKS/TATTOOS** (locate/describe) - list the location of MP's scars, marks, and tattoos and provide a brief description
- 25) **SKELETAL X-RAYS AVAILABLE** - indicate whether any skeletal x-rays are available for the MP  
**BROKEN BONES/MISSING ORGANS** - list all broken bones and/or missing organs of the MP
- 26) **DENTAL X-RAYS AVAILABLE** - indicate whether dental x-rays are available for the MP (if available, attach chart and x-rays to back of SS 8568)  
**DENTURES** - if the MP has dentures, indicate whether they are upper, lower, full or partial
- 27) **VISIBLE DENTAL WORK** - describe MP's visible dental work
- 28) **DENTIST'S NAME** - name of MP's dentist  
**PHONE #** - phone number of MP's dentist
- 29) **GLASSES/CONTACT LENS** - indicate whether MP wears glasses or contact lens  
**CLOTHING DESCRIPTION/SIZE** - list MP's clothing description and size when last seen
- 30) **JEWELRY DESCRIPTION** - list/describe jewelry MP was wearing
- 31) **IF VEHICLE INVOLVED** - if vehicle involved in MP's disappearance, indicate whether suspect [S] or [MP] and list:  
 a) **LIC** - vehicle license number, b) **MAKE** - vehicle make, c) **MODEL** - vehicle model, d) **YEAR** - vehicle year.  
 If second vehicle involved, describe under item #37.
- 32) **IF ABDUCTION, DID ABDUCTION INVOLVE MOVEMENT OF MISSING PERSON IN THE COMMISSION OF A CRIME?** - indicate whether the MP was moved during the course of a crime
- 33) **SUSPECT NAME** - name of person who abducted/kidnapped MP (if known)  
**DOB** - suspect's date of birth
- 34) **RELATIONSHIP TO MISSING PERSON** - suspect's relationship to MP, if any (i.e., uncle, father, neighbor, co-worker)  
**WARRANT #** - warrant number
- 35) **REPORTING PARTY** - name of person(s) who reported person missing  
**PHONE #** - reporting party's phone number
- 36) **RELATIONSHIP TO MISSING PERSON** - reporting party's relationship to MP (i.e., aunt, neighbor, co-worker)  
**DATE REPORTED** - date MP was initially reported missing to reporting agency
- 37) **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION** - list any additional information
- 38) **REPORTING OFFICER/AGENCY CONTACT** - officer assigned to this MP's case  
**PHONE #** - phone number of reporting officer/agency contact

**AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE  
DENTAL/SKELETAL X-RAYS/PHOTOGRAPH  
OF MISSING JUVENILE**

NAME OF MISSING JUVENILE	
REPORTING AGENCY AND CASE NUMBER	REPORTING PARTY

Under California Penal Code Section 14206, the family or next-of-kin of any person under the age of 18 years who is reported missing and has not been located within 30 days may authorize the release of the dental or skeletal X-rays, or both, and a recent photograph of the missing juvenile. ***Dental X-rays are preferred. Skeletal X-rays should be sent only if dental X-rays are not available.*** This release form **shall** be taken to the dentist, physician and surgeon, or medical facility of the missing person to obtain the release of the dental or skeletal X-rays. The dental or skeletal X-rays, or both, **shall** be released to the person presenting this request. The person to whom the records are released **shall**, within 10 days, bring those records to the police or sheriff's department or other law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the investigation.

If the law enforcement authority determines the disappearance involves evidence the person is at risk regardless of age, or if the missing juvenile is under 16 years of age and has been missing at least 14 days, this release form **shall** be taken to the dentist, physician and surgeon, or medical facility **immediately** and the dental or skeletal X-rays, or both, and a recent photograph of the missing child **shall** be submitted **immediately** to the law enforcement agency.

If your missing juvenile is found, please notify the law enforcement agency **immediately**.

**AUTHORIZATION**

I am a family member or next-of-kin of the above-named missing juvenile and I hereby authorize the release of all dental or skeletal X-rays to assist law enforcement agencies in locating the above-named missing juvenile. I also consent to the release of the above-named missing juvenile's photograph, physical description, and circumstances surrounding the disappearance. This information may be used by the Department of Justice for inclusion in missing children bulletins and posters which will be distributed throughout California to law enforcement agencies, elementary and secondary schools, state buildings, appropriate roadside rest areas, and other parties determined appropriate by the Department of Justice to assist in locating the missing juvenile, including the Attorney General's Web Site at [www.caag.state.ca.us](http://www.caag.state.ca.us).

NAME OF DENTIST			
ADDRESS			
CITY	STATE	ZIP	TELEPHONE NUMBER (       )
NAME OF PHYSICIAN, SURGEON OR MEDICAL FACILITY			
ADDRESS			
CITY	STATE	ZIP	TELEPHONE NUMBER (       )
SIGNATURE OF FAMILY MEMBER			
RELATIONSHIP TO MISSING JUVENILE			DATE
ADDRESS			
CITY	STATE	ZIP	TELEPHONE NUMBER (       )

**AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE  
DENTAL/SKELETAL X-RAYS  
OF MISSING ADULT**

NAME OF MISSING ADULT	
REPORTING AGENCY AND CASE NUMBER	REPORTING PARTY

Under California Penal Code Section 14206, the family or next-of-kin of any person reported missing and has not been located within 30 days may authorize the release of the dental or skeletal X-rays, or both, of the person reported missing. ***Dental X-rays are preferred. Skeletal X-rays should be sent only if dental X-rays are not available.*** This release form **shall** be taken to the dentist, physician and surgeon, or medical facility of the missing person to obtain the release of the dental or skeletal X-rays. The dental or skeletal X-rays, or both, **shall** be released to the person presenting this request. The person to whom the records are released **shall**, within 10 days, bring those records to the police or sheriff's department or other law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the investigation.

If the missing adult is found, please notify the law enforcement agency **immediately**.

**AUTHORIZATION**

I am a family member or next-of-kin of the above-named missing adult and I hereby authorize the release of all dental or skeletal X-rays to assist law enforcement agencies in locating the above-named missing adult. I also consent to the release of the above-named missing adult's photograph, physical description, and circumstances surrounding the disappearance. This information may be used by the Department of Justice for inclusion in missing person bulletins and posters which will be distributed throughout California to law enforcement agencies, state buildings, appropriate roadside rest areas, and other parties determined appropriate by the Department of Justice to assist in locating the missing person, including the Attorney General's Web Site at [www.caag.state.ca.us](http://www.caag.state.ca.us).

NAME OF DENTIST			
ADDRESS			
CITY	STATE	ZIP	TELEPHONE NUMBER (      )
NAME OF PHYSICIAN, SURGEON OR MEDICAL FACILITY			
ADDRESS			
CITY	STATE	ZIP	TELEPHONE NUMBER (      )
SIGNATURE OF FAMILY MEMBER			
RELATIONSHIP TO MISSING ADULT		DATE	
ADDRESS			
CITY	STATE	ZIP	TELEPHONE NUMBER (      )



## APPENDIX A

### Resources



"I appreciate getting announcements  
about research reports via e-mail."

—W. William Minor, Professor  
Department of Sociology  
Northern Illinois University

"As a teacher and recipient of OJJDP  
publications, I want you to know how  
informative, enlightening, and useful  
these publications are to both me  
and my students."

—Alice Grever, Assistant Professor  
Communications Department  
Somerset Community College

# Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse

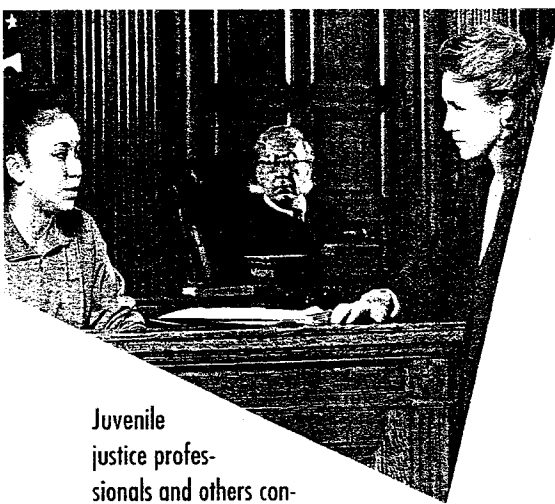
## Your Information Resource

"The information is very helpful and  
informative. . . I look forward to  
continuing to receive your publications,  
referrals, and technical assistance."

THANK YOU!

—Officer Gregory R. Tiller  
34th Judicial District Court  
State of Michigan

**OJJDP**



Juvenile justice professionals and others concerned about the Nation's youth need accurate, up-to-date information to help them address the problems of juvenile delinquency and child victimization. To develop effective initiatives, policymakers and practitioners must have reliable data and a thorough knowledge of what works and what doesn't.

### *Meeting the information needs of the juvenile justice field.*

The Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse (JJC), a component of the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS), has been meeting the information needs of the juvenile justice field since 1979. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) established JJC to provide individuals and organizations with easy access to a comprehensive collection of information and resources on juvenile justice topics. Through print and other media, JJC offers the latest research findings, descriptions of promising programs, publications on youth-related issues, practical guides and manuals, announcements of funding opportunities, and other useful resources—all prepared by the Nation's foremost experts in juvenile justice and related issues.

## Put JJC To Work for You

Although print publications are the cornerstone of JJC's information services, our dedicated Clearinghouse staff can provide the information you need in a variety of ways. JJC's team of juvenile justice professionals are ready to:

- Answer your questions over the phone or via e-mail.
- Mail you publications or videotapes.
- Perform customized literature searches.
- Compile information packages.
- Provide statistics and technical assistance using online resources.
- Direct you to OJJDP's home page on the Internet.
- Search for additional resources.
- Fax you the documents you need.
- Refer you to the appropriate grantee, contractor, or agency.

JJC has the information you need, when and where you need it.

## Join Your Colleagues and Participate in OJJDP's Information Network

### Stay Informed by Joining OJJDP's Mailing List

Join almost 100,000 of your colleagues on OJJDP's mailing list. When you register with OJJDP, you will receive the bimonthly *NCJRS Catalog*, which highlights publications and resources from OJJDP and the other agencies within the Office of Justice Programs; a subscription to *Juvenile Justice*, a periodical published three times each year; and other OJJDP publications related to your specified areas of interest. Registration is easy: look for the OJJDP exhibit or table at conferences, register online at the OJJDP Web site, or request a registration form by telephone, e-mail, or fax on demand.

## Subscribe to JUVJUST: A Free, Informative E-Mail Service

Become one of more than 5,000 juvenile justice professionals who subscribe to JUVJUST and receive announcements containing the latest information from OJJDP and the juvenile justice field, including notices of newly released publications, current grants and funding opportunities, and upcoming conferences.

*Offering easy access to a comprehensive collection of information and resources on juvenile justice topics.*

## Access More Than 300 OJJDP Publications

OJJDP currently offers more than 300 publications covering a broad range of topics related to juvenile justice, delinquency prevention, and missing and exploited children, including Fact Sheets, Bulletins, Reports, Summaries, and Portable Guides. Videotapes and other multimedia products are also available.

## Contribute to the NCJRS Library and Abstracts Database

The National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) library and NCJRS Abstracts Database contain more than 150,000 publications, including reports, articles, and audio-visual products published in the United States and other countries over the past 25 years (more than 40,000 are specifically devoted to juvenile justice issues). Contribute copies of your agency's or organization's publications, training curriculums, videotapes, and other information resources to JJC so they can be added to the collection. Your resources will be abstracted and included in the library and Abstracts Database where they can be identified through searches of the database (which can be searched online, on CD-ROM, or, upon request, by Clearinghouse staff).

## Check Out OJJDP's Informative Web Site

OJJDP's home page at [www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org) gives you instant access to the following links:

- **About OJJDP** includes the text of OJJDP's authorizing legislation and contact information for OJJDP staff.
- **JJ Facts & Figures** contains a statistical briefing book and other data-related resources.
- **Highlights** showcases time-sensitive opportunities, new features of the Web site, and new sources of information.
- **Grants & Funding** supplies notices and application forms for grants and funding opportunities.
- **Resources** details State, national, and international resources related to juvenile justice.
- **Programs** describes OJJDP-sponsored programs.
- **Publications** provides links to full-text documents in several electronic forms.
- **Calendar of Events** presents schedules of upcoming conferences, training sessions, and workshops.

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*Providing information from the Nation's foremost experts in juvenile justice and related issues.*

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## Connect With Your Colleagues

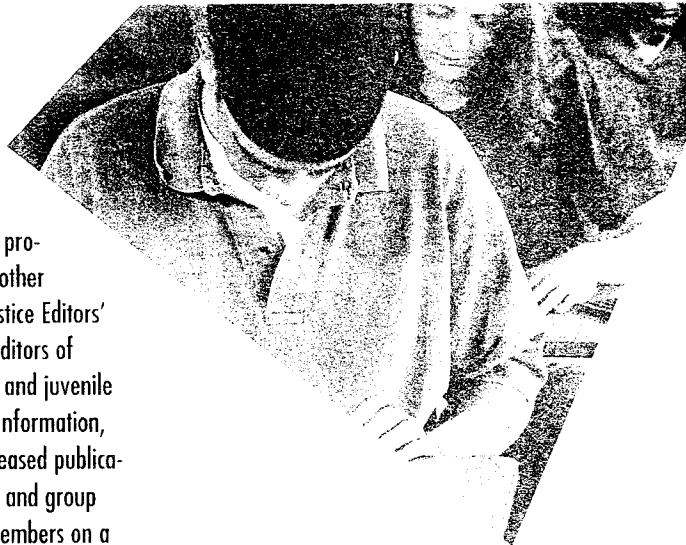
Through JJC, OJJDP can support your agency's conferences, workshops, training sessions, and other networking and outreach activities. JJC can promote your future juvenile justice events through our online Calendar of Events. Our conference support activities include exhibiting at your event, providing publications for display or distribution, and conducting presentations.

## Join the Criminal Justice Editors' Group

If your agency or organization produces a newsletter, journal, or other periodical, join the Criminal Justice Editors' Group, an association of 120 editors of periodicals addressing criminal and juvenile justice and drug policy issues. Information, including copies of recently released publications from partnering agencies and group members, is provided to the members on a monthly basis for possible inclusion in their periodicals. JJC can also provide your publication with articles on specific topics, products, and services and camera-ready copy for drop-in announcements.

## Give Us Your Feedback To Help Us Serve You Better!

In addition to providing you with top-notch service, our Clearinghouse staff will periodically ask you for a minute of your time to answer a few questions or complete a quality assurance survey. These surveys are just one means to ensure that the services and resources JJC provides meet your information needs. Please let us know when a job is well done or how we could have served you better. Your feedback makes a difference!



JJC . . .

- Answers more than 70,000 requests for information annually, via phone, fax, mail, and e-mail.
- Distributes more than 5 million OJJDP publications annually.
- Maintains a document collection and database of more than 40,000 juvenile justice titles.
- Supports OJJDP's Web site, where you can download OJJDP publications and subscribe to JUVJUST, OJJDP's e-mail information resource.
- Attends and supports more than 200 conferences each year, distributing OJJDP publications and providing information to nearly 100,000 people.







NCJ 180863

## Quick Reference Guide to OJJDP's Information Network

Assistance, publications, and more information about the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse, and available resources are easy to obtain.

Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse  
P.O. Box 6000

Rockville, MD 20849-6000

Phone: 800-638-8736 (see voice menu options for details)  
Fax: 410-792-4358 (to order publications by title or NCJ number)  
Fax: 301-519-5600 (for other assistance)  
E-mail: [puborder@ncjrs.org](mailto:puborder@ncjrs.org) (to order publications by title or NCJ number)  
E-mail: [askncjrs@ncjrs.org](mailto:askncjrs@ncjrs.org) (for other assistance)  
E-mail: [tellncjrs@ncjrs.org](mailto:tellncjrs@ncjrs.org) (to provide comments and feedback)  
Internet: [www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org) (to access OJJDP's online resources)

**Note:** Please include your contact information (name, address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail) in any mail, fax, or e-mail correspondence or request.

### TTY Services

TTY services are available for deaf and hard of hearing people at 877-712-9279 (toll free) or 301-947-8374 (local).

### Voice Menu Options

Clearinghouse staff are available Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. ET to assist you when you call our toll free number 800-638-8736. Voice menu options allow you to direct your call to the staff member best suited to handle your request. Whether you wish to request a specific publication (by title or NCJ number), ask for assistance with a specific issue related to juvenile justice, or provide feedback regarding NCJRS publications and services, JJC staff will be there to help. OJJDP funding notices and applications, Fact Sheets, and Bulletins can be faxed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (except Thursdays between 8 and 9 a.m. ET, while the system undergoes maintenance) by selecting the fax-on-demand menu option.

### JUVJUST Listserv

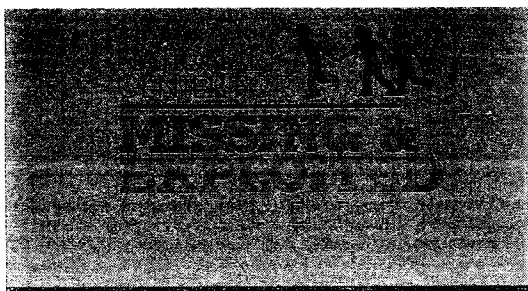
Subscribe to JUVJUST, OJJDP's e-mail information resource, by completing the following steps:

**Send** an e-mail message to [listproc@ncjrs.org](mailto:listproc@ncjrs.org).

**Leave** the subject line blank.

**Type** *subscribe juvjust* your name in the body of the message.

If you need technical assistance, please send an e-mail to [askncjrs@ncjrs.org](mailto:askncjrs@ncjrs.org).



# National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

**OJJDP** Office of Juvenile Justice  
and Delinquency Prevention  
Office of Justice Programs ♦ U.S. Department of Justice

As the nation's resource center for child protection, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® (NCMEC) spearheads national efforts to locate and recover missing children and raises public awareness about ways to prevent child abduction, molestation, and sexual exploitation. A private, nonprofit organization established in 1984, NCMEC operates under a Congressional mandate and works in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in coordinating the efforts of law enforcement, social-service agencies, elected officials, judges, prosecutors, educators, and the public and private sectors to break the cycle of violence that historically has perpetuated these needless crimes against children.

NCMEC is a national voice, mobilizer, and advocate for those too young to vote or speak up for their own rights—our children. We are working to make our children's childhoods safer.

From its creation in 1984 through December 2000, NCMEC has played a role in the recovery of more than **56,000** children, worked on more than **82,000** missing- and exploited-child cases, handled more than **1.5 million** telephone calls through our nationwide, toll-free Hotline **1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678)**, and received more than **33,000** reports on our CyberTipline **www.cybertipline.com**. We have circulated millions of photographs of missing children and trained more than **167,000** law-enforcement officers nationwide, in Canada, and in the United Kingdom. And yet, there is much more to be done.

## Children at Risk

As a society our efforts to prevent crimes that are committed against children have not kept pace with the increasing vulnerability of our youngsters. The U.S. Department of Justice reports that annually there are as many as

- **114,600** attempted abductions of children by nonfamily members
- **4,600** abductions by nonfamily members reported to law enforcement
- **300** abductions by nonfamily members where the children were gone for long periods of time or murdered
- **354,000** children abducted by family members
- **450,700** children who run away
- **127,100** children who are thrown away
- **438,200** children who are lost, injured, or otherwise missing<sup>1</sup>

## "A Strong, Loud Voice for Children"

In 1990 NCMEC merged with the Adam Walsh Child Resource Center. John and Revé Walsh—founders of the organization and parents of 6-year-old Adam who in 1981 was abducted and murdered in Florida—called upon the new organization to become "a strong, loud voice for children."

Joining the NCMEC family in 1998 is the former Lost Child Network. Established in 1983 by local law enforcement, it

joined forces with other community members to provide prevention information and recovery services to families in the midwestern United States.

Today NCMEC is truly a national organization with its headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia; the Adam Walsh Children's Fund, based in Florida, focusing upon special projects to reach millions of children and families with positive, nonfearful child-safety programs; and branch offices operating in Tustin, California; Lake Park, Florida; Kansas City, Missouri; Rochester, New York; and Columbia, South Carolina, providing hands-on assistance to families of missing children, advocating legislative changes to better protect children, conducting an array of prevention and awareness programs, and motivating individuals to become personally involved in child-protection issues.

## You Can Help

To learn more about the missing- and exploited-child issue and ways that you can join the chorus of voices around the country speaking out to better assist and protect our children, please review our list of publications and visit our web site at **www.missingkids.com**. From child-safety information to detailed information on how to investigate a missing- and exploited-child case, NCMEC offers literature on various aspects of these serious problems found in the United States today.

## BOOKS

Single copies of each book are available free of charge. The price for each book, when ordering multiple copies, is listed with the NCMEC Order Number.

### *An Analysis of Infant Abductions*

Written in conjunction with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention within the U.S. Department of Justice, and University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, this book presents the findings from interviews and record reviews of various nonfamily offenders who abducted 119 children younger than 6 months of age between 1983 and 1992. The findings include a classification of infant abduction designed for law enforcement in the investigation and apprehension of a suspect and a clinical classification designed for mental-health clinicians in the assessment and diagnosis of an abductor and in the treatment of the victim family. 62 pp.

(NCMEC Order #66 - First copy free, each additional copy \$3)

### *Child Molesters: A Behavioral Analysis*

Produced in cooperation with the FBI Academy, *Child Molesters* is an investigative tool for law-enforcement officers and child-protection professionals handling cases of children who are sexually exploited. The practitioner will learn valuable investigative strategies, the characteristics of a pedophile, and the difficulties often encountered in cases of sexual exploitation. Criminal-justice professionals will benefit from the chapter on establishing probable cause through expertise when applying for search warrants in cases of child molestation. For the researcher, a list of additional reading materials is found at the end of the text. 76 pp.

(NCMEC Order #70 - First copy free, each additional copy \$3)

### *Child Molesters Who Abduct:*

#### *Summary of the Case in Point Series*

Written in conjunction with the FBI, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention within the U.S. Department of Justice, and University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, this book examines and reports on case histories of serial child molesters and abductors while offering insights for professionals in law enforcement, the court system, healthcare, and corrections/probation on the backgrounds, behavior, and techniques of such offenders in order either to help prevent their crimes or identify and stop them more quickly. 116 pp.

(NCMEC Order #65 - First copy free, each additional copy \$5)

### *Child Sex Rings: A Behavioral Analysis*

Produced in cooperation with the FBI Academy, *Child Sex Rings* will help the criminal-justice professional handling cases of children who are sexually exploited understand the dynamics and types of child sex rings and ritualistic abuse. Investigators will benefit from the investigative techniques and protocols for handling child sex-ring cases, insights into offender strategies, and guidelines on corroborating evidence. References and additional readings on the sexual exploitation of children and ritualistic abuse are also presented. 80 pp.

(NCMEC Order #72 - First copy free, each additional copy \$3)

### *Children Traumatized in Sex Rings*

Developed in conjunction with the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, this handbook provides the child-care practitioner with important guidelines in dealing with the child victim of sexual exploitation. Issues covered include an overview of the sexual exploitation and abuse of children, a description of the different kinds of sex rings, guidelines for the physical and mental assessment of the child victim, interviewing techniques, and legal considerations. Included in the text are actual drawings made by the children in the study. 56 pp.

(NCMEC Order #71 - First copy free, each additional copy \$3)

### *Family Abduction*

Produced in cooperation with the American Bar Association, this fourth edition (which was formerly titled *Parental Kidnapping*) contains step-by-step information for parents who have experienced a family abduction—whether domestic or international. The handbook guides parents through the civil- and criminal-justice systems, explains the laws that will help them, outlines prevention methods, and provides suggestions for aftercare following the abduction. In addition, *Family Abduction* thoroughly details search and recovery strategies and contains valuable advice for attorneys, prosecutors, and family-court judges handling these difficult cases. 128 pp.

(NCMEC Order #75 - English-language version

NCMEC Order #67 - Spanish-language version

First copy free, each additional copy \$5)

### *Female Juvenile Prostitution: Problem and Response*

Developed in conjunction with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and Office for Victims of Crime within the U.S. Department of Justice along with the Paul and Lisa Program, Public Administration Service, the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, and the WHISPER Program, this handbook provides case histories of former juvenile prostitutes, information on establishing a community program to help victims of child prostitution, and a case study of one such program. Included in the text are sample forms for executing a program to help victims of child prostitution. 88 pp.

(NCMEC Order #68 - First copy free, each additional copy \$3)

### *For Healthcare Professionals: Guidelines on Prevention of and Response to Infant Abductions*

Researched and written by NCMEC's vice president and chief operating officer, who is an expert in the field of infant abductions, this sixth edition is useful to maternal/child-care nurses, healthcare security administrators, law-enforcement officials, public-relations officers, and parents. It recommends actions to be taken to prevent an infant abduction from a healthcare facility or home and outlines the steps to be taken if an abduction occurs. 74 pp.

(NCMEC Order #05 - First copy free for individuals. First 10 copies free for healthcare facilities. Each additional copy \$3)

***Guidelines for Programs to Reduce Child Victimization: A Resource for Communities When Choosing a Program to Teach Personal Safety to Children***

These guidelines detail the recommendations of NCMEC's Education Standards Task Force for communities when choosing programs to teach personal safety to children. 20 pp.

(NCMEC Order #24 - First copy free for individuals. First 10 copies free for schools and community groups. Each additional copy \$3)

***International Forum on Parental Child Abduction: Hague Convention Action Agenda***

This report details the findings of a Forum held in September 1998 to study the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and offers 12 action-agenda items to help strengthen its implementation. 24 pp.

(NCMEC Order #84 - English-language version  
NCMEC Order #85 - French-language version  
First copy free, each additional copy \$3)

***Knowing My 8 Rules for Safety: Multilingual Child Safety and Prevention Tips***

List of eight safety tips for children in Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian (Eastern and Western), Bulgarian, Chinese, Czech, Danish, English, Farsi, French, German, Haitian Creole, Hmong, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Khmer, Lao, Pashto, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Slovak, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese. 32 pp.

(NCMEC Order #69 - First 5 copies free. Each additional copy \$3)

***Missing and Abducted Children: A Law-Enforcement Guide to Case Investigation and Program Management***

Authored by a team of 38 professionals from local, state, and federal agencies, this guide outlines a standard of practice for law-enforcement officers handling missing-child cases whether runaways, throwaways, family/nonfamily abductions, or when the circumstances of the disappearance are unknown. It describes—step-by-step with definitive checklists—the investigative process required for each of these types of cases and offers a wealth of resources to assist an investigator. 232 pp.

(NCMEC Order #74 - First copy free, each additional copy \$10)

***A Model State Sex-Offender Policy***

Eight-point strategy recommended by NCMEC's Sex-Offender Policy Task Force to guide policymakers who formulate and implement concepts, policies, and laws to deal with sex offenders in their community or state. 12 pp.

(NCMEC Order #40 - First copy free, each additional copy \$3)

***Nonprofit Service Provider's Handbook***

Written by a consortium of nonprofit service providers dealing with families of missing and exploited children, this handbook was created to help existing nonprofit organizations survive and budding organizations learn from the experiences of their peers. Nonprofit service providers will find a complete guide for building the organization—choosing a board of directors, raising funds, working with law enforcement, advocating legislation, dealing with the media, producing publications, and much more. The needs of missing and exploited children and their families are extensively covered, and the appendix includes 25 sample forms. 88 pp.

(NCMEC Order #79 - First copy free, each additional copy \$5)

***Online Victimization: A Report on the Nation's Youth***

Produced in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and University of New Hampshire's Crimes Against Children Research Center, this groundbreaking national survey of 1,501 youth aged 10-17 documented their use of the Internet and experiences while online in 1999 including their unwanted exposure to sexual solicitation, sexual material, and harassment. It also includes 12 recommendations to help make the Internet safer for children. 50 pp.

(NCMEC Order #62 - First copy free, each additional copy \$3)

***Prostitution of Children and Child-Sex Tourism: An Analysis of Domestic and International Responses***

Produced in cooperation with the American Bar Association's Center on Children and the Law, this book details the child-prostitution problem in the United States and globally; discusses state, federal, and international laws in effect to address this serious crime; and offers insights into effective law-enforcement responses to better address this problem both within communities and throughout the world. 108 pp.

(NCMEC Order #73 - First copy free, each additional copy \$5)

***Recovery and Reunification of Missing Children: A Team Approach***

Written in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Missing and Exploited Children Comprehensive Action Program, this guide was designed to educate and assist professionals who bear the primary responsibility of recovering and reuniting missing children with their families. It offers "best practice" guidelines and training tips for returning a recovered child to his or her family and discusses the dynamics of criminal victimization involved in a child abduction. 52 pp.

(NCMEC Order #64 - First copy free, each additional copy \$3)

***A Report to the Nation***

NCMEC assessment of state legislative accomplishments made regarding missing- and exploited-child issues and an action agenda of recommended policies. 52 pp.

(NCMEC Order #80 - First copy free, each additional copy \$3)

**BROCHURES**

Unless otherwise indicated, up to 50 copies of each brochure are available free of charge. NCMEC charges 10 cents per copy for each brochure ordered in excess of the 50 free copies.

***Child Protection***

Prevention information for parents and children.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #01)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #02)

***Child Safety on the Information Highway***

Safety tips for families whose elementary-school-aged children use computer online services.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #03)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #06)

***For Camp Counselors***

Information on detecting and reporting child sexual exploitation.

(NCMEC Order #04)

### ***For Law-Enforcement Professionals***

Information on NCMEC resources available to assist law enforcement in the investigation of missing- and exploited-child cases.

(NCMEC Order #53)

### ***Know the Rules Brochure***

Describes three basic safety messages for teens.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #54)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #61)

### ***Know the Rules Package***

In-depth safety messages for teens.

(NCMEC Order #55)

First copy free, each additional copy \$2)

### ***Know the Rules...After-School Safety for Children Who Are Home Alone***

(NCMEC Order #36)

### ***Know the Rules...For Child Safety in Amusement or Theme Parks***

(NCMEC Order #33)

### ***Know the Rules...For Child Safety in Youth Sports***

(NCMEC Order #34)

### ***Know the Rules...General Parental Tips to Help Keep Your Children Safer***

(NCMEC Order #60)

### ***Know the Rules...School Safety Tips***

(NCMEC Order #63)

### ***Know the Rules...When Your Child Is Flying Unaccompanied***

(NCMEC Order #32)

### ***Knowing My 8 Rules for Safety***

Safety tips poster for children.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #28)

Haitian Creole-language version (NCMEC Order #42)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #29)

Braille version (NCMEC Order #26)

Bookmark version in English and Spanish (NCMEC Order #25)

### ***National Center for Missing & Exploited Children***

The brochure you are currently reading that contains a list of all NCMEC publications, information on the missing- and exploited-child issue, and highlights of NCMEC operations.

(NCMEC Order #21)

### ***New Neighborhood Safety Tips***

Bookmark (NCMEC Order #22)

Brochure (NCMEC Order #23)

### ***Teen Safety on the Information Highway***

Safety tips for families whose teenagers use computer online services.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #57)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #59)

### ***Tips to Help Prevent the Abduction and Sexual Exploitation of Your Children***

Summary of general safety tips in all NCMEC brochures.

**Available in Braille ONLY.**

(NCMEC Order #27)

### ***Just in Case...Series***

#### ***Just in Case...Babysitter***

Information on finding a babysitter and safety tips.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #12)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #14)

#### ***Just in Case...Daycare***

Information on choosing daycare and preventing sexual exploitation.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #07)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #35)

#### ***Just in Case...Exploitation***

Warning signs of and steps to take in the event of child sexual exploitation.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #20)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #51)

#### ***Just in Case...Family Separation***

Tips on preventing parental kidnapping.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #08)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #09)

Vietnamese-language version (NCMEC Order #45)

#### ***Just in Case...Federal Parent Locator Service***

Information on finding the abductor and child in parental kidnapping cases.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #11)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #47)

#### ***Just in Case...Finding Professional Help***

Advice on how to find professional help for children who have been kidnapped or sexually exploited.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #30)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #43)

Vietnamese-language version (NCMEC Order #44)

#### ***Just in Case...Grief***

Guidelines on a healthy approach to the grieving process.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #10)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #46)

#### ***Just in Case...Missing***

Five steps to prepare in case your child might someday be missing.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #17)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #18)

Vietnamese-language version (NCMEC Order #49)

#### ***Just in Case...Runaway***

Steps to take in case your child might someday run away.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #15)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #16)

Vietnamese-language version (NCMEC Order #48)

#### ***Just in Case...Testifying***

Advice on helping children testify effectively.

English-language version (NCMEC Order #19)

Spanish-language version (NCMEC Order #50)

**Sample of English-language brochures** containing general safety tips including *Child Protection, Child Safety on the Information Highway, Just in Case...Babysitter, Just in Case...Exploitation, Just in Case...Missing*, and *Know the Rules* (NCMEC Order #98)  
**Sample of Spanish-language brochures** (same as titles noted above) containing general safety tips (NCMEC Order #97)  
**All Vietnamese-language brochures** (NCMEC Order #52)

**TO ORDER** copies of NCMEC publications, complete the attached order form and send it along with full payment to National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, Charles B. Wang International Children's Building, 699 Prince Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3175, U.S.A. Make checks or purchase orders payable to NCMEC. Please do not send cash or stamps.

## Reprint Policy for NCMEC Publications

All NCMEC publications are copyrighted materials. Any individual, organization, or entity wishing to use NCMEC's copyrighted material may do so when the

- materials are to be used for educational, noncommercial purposes. Under no circumstances is NCMEC's copyrighted material to be used for fund-raising purposes.
- actual use will not be presented as a sponsorship or endorsement by NCMEC of any individual, entity, product, program, or event.
- actual use will not be presented as any type of partnership or affiliated relationship between NCMEC and the reprinter.
- National Center for Missing & Exploited Children is clearly noted as the source of the information.
- intended use will not conflict with NCMEC's standards for child safety.
- reprinter will immediately discontinue use of the copyrighted material if requested to do so by NCMEC.

Questions about this policy should be forwarded to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's Director of Publications at the Charles B. Wang International Children's Building, 699 Prince Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3175; telephone number 703-274-3900; facsimile number 703-274-2222; or [reprints@ncmec.org](mailto:reprints@ncmec.org).

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Telephone: Daytime (       ) Evening (       )

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's 24-hour, toll-free Hotline 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) is available in the United States and Canada and CyberTipline at [www.cybertipline.com](http://www.cybertipline.com) is available worldwide for those wishing to report information on missing or exploited children. The TDD Hotline is 1-800-826-7653, and the NCMEC business number is 703-274-3900. The NCMEC facsimile number is 703-274-2222. The NCMEC web-site address is [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com).

NCMEC's toll-free number when dialing from Mexico is 001-800-843-5678, and the "phone-free" number when dialing from Europe is 00-800-0843-5678.

To receive information on the services offered by our NCMEC branches and the Children's Fund, please contact them directly.

NCMEC/California  
Suite C  
18111 Irvine Boulevard  
Tustin, California 92780-3403  
714-508-0150 (telephone)  
714-508-0154 (facsimile)

NCMEC/New York  
275 Lake Avenue  
Rochester, New York 14608-1042  
716-242-0900 (telephone)  
716-242-0717 (facsimile)

NCMEC/Florida  
Suite 100  
9176 Alternate A1A  
Lake Park, Florida 33403-1445  
561-848-1900 (telephone)  
561-848-0308 (facsimile)

NCMEC/New York/Mohawk Valley Office  
PO Box 297  
New Hartford, New York 13413-0297  
315-732-7233 (telephone)  
315-732-2456 (facsimile)

NCMEC/Kansas City  
Suite B  
1018 West 39th Street  
Kansas City, Missouri 64111-3859  
816-756-5422 (telephone)  
816-756-1804 (facsimile)

NCMEC/South Carolina  
Suite C  
2008 Marion Street  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201-2151  
803-254-2326 (telephone)  
803-254-4299 (facsimile)

Adam Walsh Children's Fund  
Suite 200  
9176 Alternate A1A  
Lake Park, Florida 33403-1445  
561-863-7900 (telephone)  
561-863-3111 (facsimile)

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of Justice. *Fact Sheet on Missing Children: National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children* based on the research of David Finkelhor, Gerald Hotaling, and Andrea Sedlak. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, May 1990.

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), a national clearinghouse and resource center, is funded under Cooperative Agreement 98-MC-CX-K002 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions in this brochure are those of NCMEC and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® is a registered service mark of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. Copyright © 1991 National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. All rights reserved.



## SUPPORT GROUPS

(Adam Walsh Child Resource Center)  
now part of the National Center for Missing  
and Exploited Children  
18111 Irvine Boulevard  
Tustin, CA 92780  
(714) 508-0150  
(714) 508-0154 Fax  
(Serves country west of the Mississippi  
River. Parental & stranger abductions,  
runaways. Referral & safety programs.)

Amber Foundation for Missing Children  
P.O. Box 565  
Pinole, CA 94564  
(800) 541-0777  
(510) 758-0319 Fax  
(Hotline established for Amber Swartz.  
Stranger abductions, services.)

Child Quest International, Inc.  
1625 The Alameda, Suite 400  
San Jose, CA 95126  
(800) 248-8020 / (408) 287-4673  
(408) 287-4676 Fax  
www.childquest.org  
(protection and recovery of missing, abused,  
& exploited children and at-risk adults,  
education, referrals)

California Crisis Line  
Office of Criminal Justice Planning  
1-(800) 843-5200  
(24-hour, toll-free, non-threatening hotline  
to assist runaways and homeless youth in  
obtaining emergency services and shelter)

Find the Children  
1811 W. Olympic Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90064  
(310) 477-6721  
(310) 477-7166 Fax  
www.findthechildren.com  
(Nationwide services for searching families,  
prevention programs, stranger & parental  
abductions. Media Coverage - Missing kids  
photos)

Interstate Association for Stolen Children  
P.O. Box 131  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670  
(916) 631-7631  
(916) 631-1009 Fax

Polly Klaas Foundation  
312 Western Avenue, Suite 4  
P.O. Box 800  
Petaluma, CA 94953  
(800) 587-4357 / (707) 769-1334  
(707) 769-4019 Fax  
www.pollyklaas.org  
(Family services, parental & stranger  
abductions, runaways. Referrals)

Missing Children Clearinghouse  
California Department of Justice  
P. O. Box 903417  
Sacramento, CA 94203-4170  
1-(800) 222-FIND (California only)  
(916) 227-3270 Fax  
(Hotline & clearinghouse for collection &  
dissemination of information)



## **SUPPORT GROUPS, Cont.**

### **National Center for Missing and Exploited Children**

2101 Wilson Blvd., Suite 550  
Arlington, VA 22201-3052  
1-(800) 843-5678  
(703) 235-4067 Fax  
(Hotline & clearinghouse for collection & dissemination of information)

### **Vanished Children's Alliance**

2095 Park Avenue  
San Jose, CA 951326  
(800) 826-4743 / (408) 296-1113  
(408) 296-1117 Fax  
[www.vca.org](http://www.vca.org)  
(National registry for missing children, services, referrals, liaison for families with law enforcement, parental abductions)

### **Youth Development International**

P.O. Box 178408  
San Diego, CA 92177  
(619) 292-5683  
Youth Crisis Hotline (800) HIT-HOME or (800) 448-4663  
[www.ydi.org](http://www.ydi.org)  
(24 hour national youth crisis hotline, referrals, charity events, childrens day camps, wilderness trips.)

**Federal Resources on Missing and Exploited Children:  
A Directory For  
Law Enforcement and Other Public and Private Agencies**

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**Federal Agency Task Force for Missing and Exploited Children**

**Revised Edition - December 1997**

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The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

# Where To Get Help

## Agencies that provide...

### TRAINING

- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
- U.S. Department of Education
  - Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program*
- U.S. Department of Health and Family Services
  - Family and Youth Services Bureau*
  - National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect*
- U.S. Department of Justice
  - Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section*
  - Federal Bureau of Investigation*
  - Office for Victims of Crime*
  - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency*
  - Prevention/Missing and Exploited Children's Program*
  - U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service*
  - U.S. National Central Bureau (INTERPOL)*
- U.S. Department of State
  - Office of Children's Issues*
- U.S. Department of Treasury
  - U.S. Customs Service*
- U.S. Postal Service
  - U.S. Postal Inspection Service*

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
- U.S. Department of Defense
  - Family Advocacy Program*
- U.S. Department of Education
  - Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program*
- U.S. Department of Health and Family Services
  - Family and Youth Services Bureau*
  - National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect*
- U.S. Department of Justice
  - Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section*
  - Federal Bureau of Investigation*
  - Office for Victims of Crime*
  - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency*
  - Prevention/Missing and Exploited Children's Program*
- U.S. Department of Treasury
  - U.S. Secret Service/Forensic Services Division*
- U.S. Department of State
  - Office of Children's Issues*

**LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
U.S. Department of Defense  
*Legal Assistance Offices*

**LITIGATION ASSISTANCE**

U.S. Department of Justice  
*Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section*

**PUBLICATIONS**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
U.S. Department of Defense  
*Family Advocacy Program*  
U.S. Department of Education  
*Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program*  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
*Family and Youth Services Bureau*  
*National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect*  
U.S. Department of Justice  
*Federal Bureau of Investigation*  
*Office for Victims of Crime*  
*Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention/*  
*Missing and Exploited Children's Program*  
U.S. Department of State  
*Office of Children's Issues*  
U.S. Department of Treasury  
*U.S. Secret Service/Forensic Services Division*

**RESEARCH AND EVALUATION**

U.S. Department of Education  
*Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program*  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
*Family and Youth Services Bureau*  
*National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect*  
U.S. Department of Justice  
*Federal Bureau of Investigation*  
*Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention/*  
*Missing and Exploited Children's Program*

## **Agencies that provide services to...**

### **MISSING AND EXPLOITED YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

U.S. Department of Defense

*Family Advocacy Program*

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

*Family and Youth Services Bureau*

*National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect*

U.S. Department of State

*Office of Children's Issues*

### **FEDERAL PROSECUTORS**

U.S. Department of Justice

*Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section*

*Federal Bureau of Investigation*

*U.S. National Central Bureau (INTERPOL)*

U.S. Department of State

*Office of Children's Issues*

U.S. Department of Treasury

*U.S. Customs Service*

U.S. Postal Service

*U.S. Postal Inspection Service*

### **STATE AND LOCAL PROSECUTORS**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

U.S. Department of Justice

*Federal Bureau of Investigation*

*Office for Victims of Crime*

*Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention/*

*Missing and Exploited Children's Program*

*U.S. National Central Bureau (INTERPOL)*

U.S. Department of State

*Office of Children's Issues*

U.S. Department of Treasury

*U.S. Customs Service*

U.S. Postal Service

*U.S. Postal Inspection Service*

#### **LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
U.S. Department of Defense  
    *Family Advocacy Program*  
U.S. Department of Justice  
    *Federal Bureau of Investigation*  
    *Office for Victims of Crime*  
    *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention/*  
        *Missing and Exploited Children's Program*  
    *U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service*  
    *U.S. National Central Bureau (INTERPOL)*  
U.S. Department of State  
    *Office of Children's Issues*  
U.S. Department of Treasury  
    *U.S. Customs Service*  
    *U.S. Secret Service/Forensic Services Division*  
U.S. Postal Service  
    *U.S. Postal Inspection Service*

#### **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
U.S. Department of Health and Family Services  
    *National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect*  
U.S. Department of Justice  
    *Federal Bureau of Investigation*  
    *Office for Victims of Crime*  
    *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention/*  
        *Missing and Exploited Children's Program*  
U.S. Department of State  
    *Office of Children's Issues*  
U.S. Department of Treasury  
    *U.S. Customs Service*  
U.S. Postal Service  
    *U.S. Postal Inspection Service*

#### **NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES**

U.S. Department of Health and Family Services  
    *National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect*  
U.S. Department of Justice  
    *Federal Bureau of Investigation*  
    *Office for Victims of Crime*  
    *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention/*  
        *Missing and Exploited Children's Program*

## **DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS AND YOUTH SERVICE AGENCIES**

- U.S. Department of Education
  - Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program*
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
  - Family and Youth Services Bureau*
  - National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect*
- U.S. Department of Justice
  - Office for Victims of Crime*
  - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention/*
  - Missing and Exploited Children's Program*

## **NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
  - Family and Youth Services Bureau*
  - National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect*
- U.S. Department of Justice
  - Office for Victims of Crime*
  - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention/*
  - Missing and Exploited Children's Program*
- U.S. Department of State
  - Office of Children's Issues*

## **GENERAL PUBLIC**

- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
  - Family and Youth Services Bureau*
  - National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect*
- U.S. Department of Justice
  - Office for Victims of Crime*
  - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention/*
  - Missing and Exploited Children's Program*
- U.S. Department of State
  - Office of Children's Issues*
- U.S. Department of Treasury
  - U.S. Customs Service*



## **Agencies that provide assistance on cases involving...**

### **PARENTAL KIDNAPING**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
U.S. Department of Defense  
    *Legal Assistance Offices*  
U.S. Department of Justice  
    *Federal Bureau of Investigation*  
    *U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service*  
    *U.S. National Central Bureau (INTERPOL)*  
U.S. Department of State  
    *Office of Children's Issues*

### **RUNAWAY CHILDREN**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
    *Family and Youth Services Bureau*  
U.S. Department of Justice  
    *U.S. National Central Bureau (INTERPOL)*  
U.S. Department of Treasury  
    *U.S. Secret Service Forensic Services Division*

### **MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
U.S. Department of Defense  
    *Family Advocacy Program*  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
    *Family and Youth Services Bureau*  
    *National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect*  
U.S. Department of Justice  
    *Federal Bureau of Investigation*  
    *Office for Victims of Crime*  
    *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention/*  
    *Missing and Exploited Children's Program*  
    *U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service*  
    *U.S. National Central Bureau (INTERPOL)*  
U.S. Department of State  
    *Office of Children's Issues*  
U.S. Department of Treasury  
    *U.S. Customs Service*  
    *U.S. Secret Service/Forensic Services Division*  
U.S. Postal Service  
    *U.S. Postal Inspection Service*

## **CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
U.S. Department of Defense  
    *Family Advocacy Program*  
U.S. Department of Health and Family Services  
    *National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect*  
U.S. Department of Justice  
    *Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section*  
    *Federal Bureau of Investigation*  
    *Office for Victims of Crime*  
    *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention/*  
    *Missing and Exploited Children's Program*  
    *U.S. National Central Bureau (INTERPOL)*  
U.S. Department of Treasury  
    *U.S. Customs Service*  
    *U.S. Secret Service/Forensic Services Division*  
U.S. Postal Service  
    *U.S. Postal Inspection Service*

## **CHILD PROSTITUTION**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
U.S. Department of Justice  
    *Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section*  
    *Federal Bureau of Investigation*  
    *Office for Victims of Crime*  
    *U.S. National Central Bureau (INTERPOL)*

## **CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
U.S. Department of Justice  
    *Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section*  
    *Federal Bureau of Investigation*  
    *Office for Victims of Crime*  
    *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention/*  
    *Missing and Exploited Children's Program*  
    *U.S. National Central Bureau (INTERPOL)*  
U.S. Department of Treasury  
    *U.S. Customs Service*  
    *U.S. Secret Service/Forensic Services Division*  
U.S. Postal Service  
    *U.S. Postal Inspection Service*

## **SEXUAL TOURISM**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
U.S. Department of Justice  
    *Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section*  
    *Federal Bureau of Investigation*  
    *Office for Victims of Crime*  
U.S. Department of Treasury  
    *U.S. Customs Service*  
    *U.S. Secret Service/Forensic Services Division*

## **INTERNATIONAL ABDUCTION**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
U.S. Department of Defense  
    *Legal Assistance Offices*  
U.S. Department of Justice  
    *Federal Bureau of Investigation*  
    *U.S. National Central Bureau (INTERPOL)*  
U.S. Department of State  
    *Office of Children's Issues*

## **INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION**

U.S. Department of Justice  
    *U.S. National Central Bureau (INTERPOL)*  
U.S. Department of State  
    *Office of Children's Issues*

## **Agencies that provide 24-hour information and referral sources to children and their families...**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
    *Family and Youth Services Bureau*  
U.S. Department of State  
    *Consular Affairs Duty Officer (when an international abduction is in progress)*

## **Agencies that provide compensation to crime victims...**

U.S. Department of Justice  
    *Office for Victims of Crime*

**Agencies that provide forensic services...**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

U.S. Department of Justice

*Federal Bureau of Investigation*

U.S. Department of Treasury

*U.S. Secret Service/Forensic Services Division*



## **List of Acronyms**

AFIS -- Automated Fingerprint Identification System  
BCP -- Basic Center Program  
CASKU -- Child Abduction and Serial Killer Unit  
CCR -- Community Crisis Response  
CEOS -- Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section  
CI -- Children's Issues  
CIRG -- Critical Incident Response Group  
CJA -- Children's Justice Act  
DoD -- Department of Defense  
FBI -- Federal Bureau of Investigation  
FISH -- Forensic Information System for Handwriting  
FYSB -- Family and Youth Services Bureau  
JJDP -- Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention  
NCB -- National Central Bureau  
NCCAN -- National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect  
NCFY -- National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth  
NCIC -- National Crime Information Center  
NCJRS -- National Criminal Justice Reference Service  
NCMEC -- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
OVC -- Office for Victims of Crime  
OJJDP -- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention  
RICO -- Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations  
SOP -- Street Outreach Program  
TECS -- Treasury Enforcement Computer System  
TLP -- Transitional Living Program  
USNCB -- U.S. National Central Bureau (INTERPOL)  
VICAP -- Violent Criminal Apprehension Program  
VOCA -- Victims of Crime Act

**APPENDIX B**

USDOJ Bulletin *Internet Crimes Against Children*



# OVJ

DECEMBER 2001

# Bulletin

## INTERNET CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN

New computer technology presents complex challenges for law enforcement agencies and victim service providers. These professionals must protect Internet users as they conduct investigations, secure evidence, identify and apprehend offenders, and help child victims and their families. Based on the knowledge and experience of those working with child victims, this Bulletin focuses attention on child victims of Internet-based crimes, highlighting the challenges for law enforcement personnel and victim service providers, examining who the child victims are, and determining how best to respond to these victims' needs and the needs of their families.

### Introduction

The growth of technology has changed our lives dramatically. Computers were viewed as a luxury or even an extravagance 30 years ago. We relied on television, newspapers, and radio as primary sources of news and information. Cables, modems, and online services were virtually nonexistent.

Today, computers are prevalent in businesses, homes, schools, libraries, and even airports. The World Wide Web provides instant access to news, reference information, shopping, banking, stock trading, auctions, and travel information and reservations. People routinely use the Internet to take college courses, play games, listen to music, and view videos. Chat rooms and e-mails are now replacing telephones as our favorite means of long-distance communication.

The proliferation of computer technology obviously has enhanced our lives in many ways, such as enabling improved productivity and efficiency at work, school, and home. Anyone with access to a computer and modem now has unparalleled recreational and educational opportunities.

Unfortunately, criminals are also using modern technology—to prey on innocent victims. Computers and the Internet have made the predator's job easier. Historically, child predators found their victims in public places where children tend to gather—schoolyards, playgrounds, and shopping malls. Today, with so many children online, the Internet

### Message From THE DIRECTOR

Children have always been vulnerable to victimization. Their trusting natures and parents make them perfect targets for perpetrators—both people they know and those they don't. As children grow into adolescents, they remain vulnerable to victimization. Youth are often curious and eager to try new things. Many youth struggle with issues of rebellion and independence and seek attention and affection from people outside the home, often by using computers. Today, an estimated 10 million children are using the Internet. By 2005, approximately 77 million kids will be online. With so many children online, today's predators can easily find and exploit them. For predators, the Internet is a new, effective, and more anonymous way to seek out and groom children for criminal purposes such as producing and distributing child pornography, contacting and stalking children for the purpose of engaging in sexual acts, and exploiting children for sexual tourism for personal and commercial purposes.

The nature of Internet crimes presents complex new challenges for law enforcement agencies and victim service providers with regard to investigating crimes, collecting evidence, identifying and apprehending offenders, and

*Continued on page 2*



*Continued from page 1*

assisting child victims and their families. For example, victims and perpetrators are often separated geographically, which may hamper investigation efforts. Also, victims are often ashamed and reluctant to come forward, which makes identifying offenders difficult. These challenges are being addressed by federal and local law enforcement agencies, but there is still much to learn about preventing, identifying, and investigating Internet-based crimes against children.

This Bulletin is based on the experiences of professionals now working with child victims of Internet crimes and their families. It highlights some of the challenges law enforcement and victim service professionals face in addressing Internet crimes against children and focuses attention on child victims of these crimes by examining who they are and how best to respond to their needs and the needs of their families.

*John W. Grillo*  
*Director*

provides predators a new place—cyberspace—to target children for criminal acts. This approach eliminates many of the risks predators face when making contact in person.

## Scope of the Problem

The sheer number of young people using computers today makes our concern for them well founded.

Recent years have seen a great increase in access to and use of the Internet. By the end of 1998, more than 40 percent of all American homes had computers, and 25 percent had Internet access.<sup>1</sup> This trend is expected to continue. Children and teenagers are one of the fastest growing groups of Internet users. An estimated 10 million kids are online today. By the year 2002, this figure is expected to increase to

45 million, and by 2005 to 77 million.<sup>2</sup> With so many youth online and vulnerable to predators, it is extremely important for parents, law enforcement officials, prosecutors, and victim service providers to know as much as possible about Internet crimes against children so they can prevent victimization and prosecute offenders.

## Children as Targets of Internet Crimes—Who Is Vulnerable?

Traditionally, both intrafamilial offenders and strangers have found that young children and teenagers are perfect targets for criminal acts because they are often trusting, naive, curious, adventuresome, and eager for attention and affection. However, the most attractive factor to predators is that children and teenagers historically have not been viewed as credible witnesses. Today, the danger to children is even greater because the Internet provides predators anonymity. Whether the victimization occurs in person or over the Internet, the process is the same—the perpetrator uses information to target a child victim. For example, the predator may initiate an online friendship with a young person, sharing hobbies and interests. This may lead to the exchange of gifts and pictures. Just like the traditional predator who targets children in person, the online predator usually is willing to spend considerable time befriending and grooming a child. The predator wants to build the child's trust, which will allow the predator to get what he or she ultimately wants from the child.

Although no family is immune to the possibility that their child may be exploited and harassed on the Internet, a few factors make some children more vulnerable than others. Older children tend to be

at greater risk because they often use the computer unsupervised and are more likely to engage in online discussions of a personal nature. Some victims become unwitting participants as they actively participate in chat rooms, trade e-mail messages, and send pictures online. Troubled or rebellious teens who are seeking emancipation from parental authority can be susceptible to Internet predators. The risk of victimization is greater for emotionally vulnerable youth who may be dealing with issues of sexual identity. These young people may be willing to engage in conversation that is both titillating and exciting but appears innocent and harmless. Unfortunately, Internet interactions that initially appear innocent can gradually lead to sexually explicit conduct.<sup>3</sup>

## Types of Internet Victimization

Internet crimes are often thought of as victimless. Nothing could be further from the truth. Children and teenagers can and do become victims of Internet crimes. Predators contact teenagers and children over the Internet and victimize them by

- Enticing them through online contact for the purpose of engaging them in sexual acts.
- Using the Internet for the production, manufacture, and distribution of child pornography.
- Using the Internet to expose youth to child pornography and encourage them to exchange pornography.
- Enticing and exploiting children for the purpose of sexual tourism (travel with the intent to engage in sexual behavior) for commercial gain and/or personal gratification.

## Unique Characteristics of Cybercrimes

Several characteristics distinguish Internet crimes from other crimes committed against children:

**Physical contact between the child and the perpetrator does not need to occur for a child to become a victim or for a crime to be committed.** Innocent pictures or images of children can be digitally transformed into pornographic material and distributed across the Internet without the victims' knowledge.

**The Internet provides a source for repeated, long-term victimization of a child that can last for years, often without the victim's knowledge.** Once a child's picture is displayed on the Internet, it can remain there forever. Images can stay on the Internet indefinitely without damage to the quality of the image.

**These crimes transcend jurisdictional boundaries, often involving multiple victims from different communities, states, and countries.** The geographic location of a child is not a primary concern for perpetrators who target victims over the Internet. Often, perpetrators travel hundreds of miles to different states and countries to engage in sexual acts with children they met over the Internet. Many of these cases involve local, state, federal, and international law enforcement entities in multiple jurisdictions.

**Many victims of Internet crimes do not disclose their victimization or even realize that they have been victims of a crime.** Whereas children who experience physical or sexual abuse may disclose the abuse to a friend, teacher, or parent, many victims of Internet crimes remain anonymous until pictures or images are

discovered by law enforcement during an investigation. The presumed anonymity of Internet activities often provides a false sense of security and secrecy for both the perpetrator and the victim.

## Youth Internet Safety Survey

Although it was clear that young people are using the Internet in ever-increasing numbers, no research existed on how many youth encounter unwanted sexual solicitations and exposure to sexual material and harassment online. To obtain a clearer picture of the scope of the problem, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) provided funding to Dr. David Finkelhor, Director of the Crimes Against Children Research Center at the University of New Hampshire, to conduct a research survey in 1999 on Internet victimization of youth. His research provides the best profile of this problem to date.

Crimes Against Children Research Center staff interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,501 youth, aged 10 to 17, who used the Internet regularly. "Regular use" was defined as using the Internet at least once a month for the past 6 months on a computer at home, at school, in a library, at someone else's home, or in some other place.

### Survey Areas

The survey looked at four types of online victimization of youth, which Finkelhor defined as

- **Aggressive sexual solicitation:** Sexual solicitations involving offline contact with the perpetrator through mail, by telephone, or in person, or attempts or requests for offline contact.
  - **Unwanted exposure to sexual material:** When online, opening e-mail, or opening e-mail links, and not seeking or expecting sexual material, being exposed to pictures of naked people or people having sex.
  - **Harassment:** Threats or other offensive content (not sexual solicitation) sent online to the youth or posted online for others to see.
- The survey also explored Internet safety practices used by youth and their families, what factors may put some youth more at risk for victimization than others, and the families' knowledge of how to report online solicitations and harassment.
- ### Statistical Findings
- The survey results offered the following statistical highlights:
- One in 5 youth received a sexual approach or solicitation over the Internet in the past year.
  - One in 33 youth received an aggressive sexual solicitation in the past year. This means a predator asked a young person to meet somewhere, called a young person on the phone, and/or sent the young person correspondence, money, or gifts through the U.S. Postal Service.
  - One in 4 youth had an unwanted exposure in the past year to pictures of naked people or people having sex.
  - One in 17 youth was threatened or harassed in the past year.

- Most young people who reported these incidents were not very disturbed about them, but a few found them distressing.
- Only a fraction of all episodes was reported to authorities such as the police, an Internet service provider, or a hotline.
- About 25 percent of the youth who encountered a sexual approach or solicitation told a parent. Almost 40 percent of those reporting an unwanted exposure to sexual material told a parent.
- Only 17 percent of youth and 11 percent of parents could name a specific authority, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), CyberTipline, or an Internet service provider, to which they could report an Internet crime, although more indicated they were vaguely aware of such authorities.
- In households with home Internet access, one-third of parents said they had filtering or blocking software on their computers.

### Other Findings

The survey results confirm what is already known: although the Internet is a wonderfully fun and educational tool, it can also be very dangerous. According to the survey, one in five youth who regularly use the Internet received sexual solicitations or approaches during a 1-year period. The survey also found that offenses and offenders are more diverse than previously thought. In addition to pedophiles, other predators use the Internet. Nearly half (48 percent) of the offenders were other youth, and one-fourth of the aggressive episodes were initiated by females. Further, 77 percent of targeted youth were age 14 or older—not

an age characteristically targeted by pedophiles. Although the youth stopped most solicitations by leaving the Web site, logging off, or blocking the sender, the survey confirmed current thinking that some youth are particularly vulnerable to online advances.

Most youth reported not being distressed by sexual exposures online. However, a significant 23 percent reported being very or extremely upset, 20 percent reported being very or extremely embarrassed, and 20 percent reported at least one symptom of stress. These findings point to the need for more research on the effects on youth of unwanted exposure to sexual materials and the indicators of potentially exploitative adult-youth relationships.

The large number of solicitations that went unreported by youth and families was of particular interest. This underreporting is attributed to feelings of embarrassment or guilt, ignorance that the incident was a reportable act, ignorance of how to report it, and perhaps resignation to a certain level of inappropriate behavior in the world.

Possibly due to the nature and small sample size of the survey, there were no reported incidences of traveler cases.<sup>6</sup> The survey also revealed no incidences of completed Internet seduction or sexual exploitation, including trafficking of child pornography. Despite the findings of this survey, law enforcement agencies report increasing incidents of Internet crimes against children.

### Recommendations

Among the many findings of Finkelhor's survey, the most significant is that we are only beginning to realize the extent of the complex and increasingly prevalent phenomenon of Internet-based crimes against children. We have much to learn about the magnitude of the

problem, the characteristics of its victims and perpetrators, its impact on children, and strategies for prevention and intervention.

## Information and Intervention Resources

### National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children is a comprehensive resource for families, victim service practitioners, and law enforcement personnel. NCMEC is supported by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and functions as a clearinghouse and resource center for collecting and distributing information about missing, runaway, and sexually exploited children, including exploitation resulting from Internet solicitations. In partnership with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, U.S. Customs Service, and FBI, NCMEC operates the CyberTipline, an online form for reporting suspected child sexual exploitation ([www.missingkids.com/cybertip](http://www.missingkids.com/cybertip)), and the Child Pornography Tipline (1-800-843-5678). Through the Cyber Tipline and the telephone hotline, NCMEC

- Receives reports 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, of child sexual exploitation and the production and distribution of pornography on the Internet. Calls to the toll-free Child Pornography Tipline can be received from the United States, Canada, Mexico, and the United Kingdom.
- Receives reports of offenses such as child pornography, child sex tourism, online enticement of children for sexual acts, and child

sexual molestation (outside the family). Analysts review each report and provide information to investigating law enforcement agencies.

- Provides leads on child exploitation cases to appropriate law enforcement authorities and agencies.

NCMEC case managers work directly with law enforcement personnel, offering technical assistance, resources, information, and advice on child sexual exploitation. NCMEC also has developed specialized training programs, materials, and curricula designed for law enforcement personnel. Training is available at little or no cost to local jurisdictions through OJJDP. For more information on current programs, call 1-800-843-5678.

### Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program

In 1998, the Missing Children's Program of OJJDP initiated its Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) task force program, a national effort to combat the threat of offenders who use the Internet to sexually exploit children. Through this program, state and local law enforcement agencies can acquire the skills, equipment, and personnel resources to respond effectively to ICAC offenses. The program encourages law enforcement agencies to develop specialized multijurisdictional, multiagency responses to prevent, interdict, investigate, and prosecute Internet crimes against children. As of mid-2000, 30 ICAC task forces were participating in the ICAC task force program. Each task force is composed of federal, state, and local law enforcement personnel; federal and local prosecution officials; local educators; and service providers such as mental health professionals. These task forces serve as valuable regional resources for assistance to parents, educators, prosecutors, law enforcement personnel, and others who

work on child victimization issues. You can obtain more information on this and other law enforcement programs from the OJJDP Web site at [ojjdp.ncjrs.org/programs/programs.html](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/programs/programs.html).

### Federal Bureau of Investigation

The FBI has established the Innocent Images program to focus specifically on computer-facilitated child sexual exploitation. Each FBI Field Division has designated two Crimes Against Children Coordinators to work with state and local law enforcement officials to investigate and prosecute cases that cross jurisdictional boundaries. OVC has placed a victim witness coordinator in the Innocent Images program to focus greater attention on the needs of child victims.

### U.S. Postal Inspection Service

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service protects children online by monitoring the transmission of child pornography through the mail. Increased amounts of pornography are being sent through U.S. mail as more illicit Web sites emerge advertising child pornographic material for sale. In response, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service is tracking down these materials. In addition, the U.S. Customs Service Cyber Smuggling Center monitors the illegal generation, importation, and proliferation of child pornography.

### The Future

**T**he future holds many challenges for those fighting Internet crimes against young people. Cases involving Internet crimes against children are complex and labor intensive for both the police and prosecutors. The time between victimization and arrest can be lengthy. These cases are usually multijurisdictional, which presents challenges in the investigation and prosecution of a case and can present problems for the criminal

justice system, the child victim, and the family in terms of resources, travel, and court appearances.

### Challenges

Child victimization on the Internet is a complex matter. The full impact of such victimization on children is not completely understood. Family dynamics often play a significant role in children's denial of a crime and their willingness to participate in the investigation and prosecution. A child's ability to acknowledge and accept the crime can be linked to family values, peer pressure, and feelings of guilt, shame, and embarrassment. Denial and recantation can be common among children who unwittingly participated in the crime. Because of these issues, the greatest challenges facing law enforcement and victim service professionals are to identify the victims, protect their privacy, and serve them without further victimization.

Until more knowledge is gathered about Internet crime and its effects on victims, law enforcement and victim service professionals will continue working on Internet child exploitation using the tactics and standard approaches that have proved effective for working with other types of child victims. These tactics and approaches are discussed below.

#### For Children

- Ensure that the interview is conducted with developmentally appropriate language. A child's ability to relate to concepts and receive messages varies depending on his or her stage of development. The interviewer must assess the child's developmental level and adapt the interview accordingly.
- Ensure that the interview is conducted in a culturally sensitive manner with culturally appropriate

language. Determine which words the child is comfortable with. Is an interpreter needed? If so, use a professional interpreter and not a family member. Family members inadvertently may interject their interpretations into the translation and may prejudice the child's account.

- Be patient with victims. At first, many victims will deny their involvement. However, with continued support and encouragement, the child victim usually will divulge and discuss the victimization.
- Avoid duplicative interviews when possible. Multiple interviewers and interviews tend to confuse and intimidate children, especially younger ones, and may revictimize the child and produce inconsistent victim statements. Joint or taped interviews minimize the number of interviews required and maintain consistent phrasing of questions.
- If the victim is from another jurisdiction, work with victim witness staff in that community to ensure that victim services are provided.
- Do not show surprise or shock. Remember, the youth is probably already feeling guilt, shame, or embarrassment about what occurred.
- Be honest with the child about what he or she can expect from the investigation and prosecution of the case and about any future contact he or she may have with the perpetrator.
- Talk to the child victim about a victim impact statement and restitution if the case will be prosecuted and if it is developmentally appropriate. Regardless of the child's age, find ways to give him or her a sense of

control over the situation—provide choices, no matter how small, and help him or her prepare for the court process. Consider requesting a guardian ad litem to represent and support the child throughout the legal process. Make the child familiar with the courtroom environment. A properly prepared child may find active involvement in the case empowering.

#### For the Family

- Internet crimes against children impact the entire family. Family members may feel guilty for not protecting their child more effectively. They also may feel anger or shame about their child's involvement in the crime. Family members are secondary victims and need to be offered support and information to help them understand the nature of these crimes and know how to better handle their often conflicting feelings.
- Assist families victimized by Internet crime who require travel and lodging arrangements related to the legal proceedings, such as depositions and hearings.
- Prepare the family for media and press coverage. Be sensitive to the privacy needs of the victim and family. Will the victim's name appear in any public documents? If so, can these documents be sealed if the family so desires?
- Help the family understand what their child is experiencing so they can help the child and feel some sense of control over the situation.

## Notes

1. *Falling Through the Net: Defining the Digital Divide*, July 8, 1999, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.
2. Statistics, ProtectKids.org, [www.protectkids.org/statistics.htm](http://www.protectkids.org/statistics.htm).
3. Magid, Lawrence, 1992, *Child Safety on the Information Highway* (pamphlet), National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.
4. Finkelhor, David, Kimberly J. Mitchell, and Janis Wolak, 2000, *Online Victimization: A Report on the Nation's Youth*, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children: Arlington, VA.
5. Ibid.
6. A traveler case is when an adult travels to meet and have sex with a youth he or she met on the Internet.
7. Turman, K.M., and K.L. Poyer, 1998, *Child Victims and Witnesses: A Handbook for Criminal Justice Professionals*, Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice: Washington, DC.

## For Further Information

### NCJRS Publications

The following publications are available to professionals who work with child victims and child witnesses. To obtain copies free of charge from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS), call 1-800-851-3420 or log on to [www.puborder.ncjrs.org](http://www.puborder.ncjrs.org).

*A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety* (pamphlet). 1998. Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Department of Justice. (See full text online at [www.fbi.gov/library](http://www.fbi.gov/library); also published in *Compiler* Vol. 19(1), Summer 1999, pp. 14-17.)

*Child Sexual Exploitation: Improving Investigations and Protecting Victims: A Blueprint for Action*. 1995. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice.

*Federal Resources on Missing and Exploited Children: A Directory for Law Enforcement and Other Public and Private Agencies*. 1997. Washington, DC: Federal Agency Task Force for Missing and Exploited Children, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice.

Lanning, Kenneth A. "Cyber 'Pedophiles': A Behavioral Perspective." *The APSAC Advisor. Special Issue: Children and the Internet*. Newton, MA: American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children. Vol. 11(4), Winter 1998.

Saywitz, Karen J., and Kathleen Coulborn Faller. *Interviewing Child Witnesses and Victims of Sexual Abuse* (Portable Guide). 1996. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice.

Turman, K.M., and K.L. Poyer. *Child Victims and Witnesses: A Handbook for Criminal Justice Professionals*. 1998. Washington, DC: Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice.

## NCMEC Publications

To obtain free single copies of the following publications, call the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children at 1-800-THELOST (1-800-843-5678) or make your request online at [www.missingkids.org](http://www.missingkids.org). There may be a charge for additional copies.

*A Guide for Internet Service Providers To Assist Law Enforcement in Combating Child Exploitation* (Fact Sheet). 1998. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. Guidelines intended to show how Internet service providers (ISPs) can assist law enforcement in reducing child victimization in cyberspace. (NCMEC order #58.)

Magid, Lawrence. *Teen Safety on the Information Highway* (pamphlet). 1998. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. Safety tip for families whose teenagers use computer online services. (English version, NCMEC order #57. Spanish version, NCMEC order #59. First 50 copies free; each additional copy, 10¢.)

———. *Child Safety on the Information Highway* (pamphlet). 1992. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. Safety tips for families whose elementary school-aged children use computer online services. (English version, NCMEC order #03. Spanish version, NCMEC order #06. First 50 copies free; each additional copy, 10¢.)

*Cyberspace Strategy*. 1998. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. An issue brief that sets forth NCMEC's strategy to keep children safe on the information highway.

*CyberTipline: Your Resource for Reporting the Sexual Exploitation of Children*. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. (NCMEC order #13.)

Finkelhor, David, Kimberly J. Mitchell, and Janis Wolak. *Online Victimization: A Report on the Nation's Youth*. 2000. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. (NCMEC order #62. First copy free; each additional copy, \$3.)

## Additional Reading

Armagh, Daniel. "A Safety Net for the Internet: Protecting Our Children." *Juvenile Justice* 5(1) 1998, pp. 9-15. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice.

*Child Sexual Exploitation: Improving Investigations and Protecting Victims: A Blueprint for Action*. 1995. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice.

National Crime Prevention Council. *Cybersafe Kids: A Parents' Guide* (pamphlet). 1999. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice. (Available online at [www.npc.org/10adu12.htm](http://www.npc.org/10adu12.htm).)

*What's My Job in Court? An Answer and Activity Book for Kids Who Are Going to Court*. 1998. Washington, DC: Victim Witness Assistance Unit, U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, U.S. Department of Justice. Request copies of this book by calling 202-514-7130.

Whitcomb, D., and J. Eastin. *Joining Forces Against Child Sexual Exploitation: Models for a Multijurisdictional Team Approach*. 1998. Washington, DC: Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice.

## Organizations

For more information, contact the following organizations:

### Office for Victims of Crime

U.S. Department of Justice  
810 Seventh Street NW., Eighth Floor  
Washington, DC 20531  
Phone: 202-616-3575  
Fax: 202-514-6383  
World Wide Web: [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/)

### Office for Victims of Crime Resource Center (OVCRC)

P.O. Box 6000  
Rockville, MD 20849-6000  
Phone: 1-800-627-6872 or  
301-519-5500  
(TTY 1-877-712-9279)  
World Wide Web: [www.ncjrs.org](http://www.ncjrs.org)  
E-mail: [askovc@ojp.usdoj.gov](mailto:askovc@ojp.usdoj.gov)

### National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)

Charles B. Wang International Children's Building  
699 Prince Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-3175  
Phone: 703-274-3900  
Fax: 703-274-2222  
World Wide Web: [www.missingkids.org](http://www.missingkids.org)

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**APPENDIX C**

USDOJ Paper *The Criminal Justice System's Response to Parental Abduction*





# The Criminal Justice System's Response to Parental Abduction

**Kathi L. Grasso, Andrea J. Sedlak, Janet L. Chiancone, Frances Gragg, Dana Schultz, and Joseph F. Ryan**

Millions of Americans receive advertisements in the mail with pictures of missing children and their alleged abductors. Many people quickly glance at the pictures, some study them more carefully, and some do not look at all. In the majority of cases, these children have been abducted by relatives, usually a parent.

Parental abduction can have a devastating impact on the child who is abducted and also the parent who is left behind. A quick recovery is critical to reducing the trauma to both child and parent. Law enforcement and criminal court involvement in these cases can make the difference in how effectively the search is conducted and can influence how quickly the child is recovered.

To better understand the criminal justice system's response to parental abduction, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) funded a study—conducted jointly by the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law and Westat—that examined this issue. This Bulletin summarizes the primary findings of this study.<sup>1</sup>

## Definition and Legal Framework

For purposes of this Bulletin (and for much of the research conducted on this issue), parental abduction (also referred

to as “family abduction”) is defined as “the taking, retention, or concealment of a child or children by a parent, other family member, or their agent, in derogation of the custody rights, including visitation rights, of another parent or family member” (Girdner, 1993:1–11). Abductors may be other family members or their agents (e.g., girlfriend, boyfriend, grandparent, or even a private investigator), although in most cases the abductor is a child's parent (Girdner, 1993). Some State criminal statutes use the term “custodial interference” (rather than parental abduction, family abduction, or kidnapping) when referring to this crime and may include incidents in which children are detained or enticed away from the custodial parent. Custodial interference can also be defined to include interference with a court order of visitation or access.

Although many individuals, including some law enforcement personnel, perceive parental abduction as “civil in nature” and a private family matter best handled outside the realm of the criminal justice system, it is a crime in all 50 States and the District of Columbia and, in most cases, constitutes a felony. In some States, parental abduction constitutes a crime only in cases in which a custody order has been violated. In others, no custody order is required for parental abduction to be considered a criminal offense.

## A Message From OJJDP

The expeditious return of a missing child who has been abducted is a critical step toward alleviating the trauma suffered by both child and parent. The active involvement of both law enforcement and criminal court officials is, of course, integral to attaining this desired goal.

As research has demonstrated, the most prevalent form of child abduction in the United States is parental kidnapping. This Bulletin draws on findings of a study conducted for OJJDP by the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law and Westat to assess the criminal justice system's response to parental abduction.

Parental abduction is a crime in all 50 States and in the District of Columbia and, in most cases, constitutes a felony. The OJJDP study reviewed all stages of the criminal justice system's response to this crime, including the reporting of the abduction, the investigation of the case, the finding and recovery of the victim, and the criminal prosecution of the perpetrator or perpetrators. To date, it is one of the most comprehensive studies of this issue.

Children stand to benefit from a review of the study's findings by law enforcement and court officials and other representatives of the justice system. The information provided in these pages is intended to facilitate such crucial consideration.

## Criminal and Civil Laws Regarding Parental Abduction

**The Missing Children's Act of 1982 (28 U.S.C. § 534(a)).** This Act requires the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to enter descriptive information on missing children into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database, a computer database with information on missing persons that can be accessed by law enforcement agencies nationwide.

**The National Child Search Assistance Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. § 5780).** This Act requires that State and local law enforcement agencies immediately enter information on missing children younger than 18 into the NCIC database and prohibits such agencies from maintaining any waiting period prior to taking a report of a missing child.

**The Missing Children's Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 5771 *et seq.*).** Enacted in 1984 and reauthorized in 1988, 1992, and 1999, this Act resulted in the establishment of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. NCMEC serves as a national resource center on missing children, providing support to criminal justice system personnel and aggrieved parents as they seek to identify and recover missing children, including those who have been abducted by a parent. It operates a toll-free hotline, provides technical assistance to law enforcement personnel in the field, and educates the public and others on relevant issues.

**The Parental Kidnapping Prevention Act of 1980 (28 U.S.C. § 1738A).** Providing for civil remedies, this Federal Act gives jurisdictional priority to the child's home State in parental abduction cases where conflicts arise between two States. It extends the Federal Fugitive Felon Act to cases in which a child has been taken out of a State where that act would constitute a felony, thus enabling the FBI to investigate. It also authorizes certain persons access to the Federal Parent Locator Service for purposes of identifying the whereabouts of a parentally abducted child.

**The Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Act (UCCJA).** An important civil remedy that exists to combat parental abduction, this jurisdictional statute governs when a court has jurisdiction over a parental abduction case and attempts to prevent the occurrence of simultaneous proceedings in two different States. It has been enacted with some variation in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands.

**The Uniform Child-Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act (UCCJEA).** The Uniform Child-Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act, adopted unanimously by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws in 1997 and approved by the American Bar Association in 1998, amends UCCJA to bring it into conformity with the Parental Kidnapping Prevention Act. UCCJEA also clarifies jurisdictional provisions of UCCJA that courts have interpreted inconsistently across the country. As of January 2001, 22 States had enacted UCCJEA.<sup>1</sup>

**The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.** This Convention, ratified by the United States in 1988, is an international treaty currently in effect in 43 countries.<sup>2</sup> It serves to simplify and expedite the return process when children have been abducted internationally. The Convention's implementing procedures can be found in the International Child Abduction Remedies Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 11601 *et seq.*). In 1993, the United States also passed the International Parental Kidnapping Crime Act (18 U.S.C. § 1204), making the abduction or retention of a child from the United States a felony.

1. For more detail about UCCJEA, including a list of States that have adopted the Act, see [http://www.nccustl.org/nccustl/uniformact\\_factsheets/uniformacts-fs-uccjea.asp](http://www.nccustl.org/nccustl/uniformact_factsheets/uniformacts-fs-uccjea.asp).

2. For the most recent list of countries that have ratified the Hague Convention, see [http://travel.state.gov/hague\\_list.html](http://travel.state.gov/hague_list.html).

## Study Background

The primary goal of the study was to provide further insight into whether and how the criminal justice system intervenes in

parental abduction cases by collecting data on the following:

- ◆ National estimates of parental abduction reports to law enforcement authorities and resulting arrests.

- ◆ National estimates of parental abduction cases which were opened by prosecutors and in which criminal charges were filed.
- ◆ Law enforcement authorities' use of management information systems (MISs) and written policies and procedures in responding to parental abduction reports.
- ◆ Staffing characteristics and administrative resources.
- ◆ Staff participation in formal training or special programs addressing parental abduction.
- ◆ Parental abduction case flow through the criminal justice system.
- ◆ Characteristics of cases in which law enforcement intervened by investigating and/or filing criminal complaints.
- ◆ Model approaches to the handling of parental abduction cases.

The study consisted of three phases:

- ◆ **Phase 1:** A nationally representative survey of law enforcement agencies and prosecutors' offices.
- ◆ **Phase 2:** Site visits to six counties where a larger than average number of parental abduction cases were prosecuted.
- ◆ **Phase 3:** A review of individual parental abduction case files in the law enforcement agencies and prosecutors' offices of three of the six jurisdictions visited.

The study examined all facets of the criminal justice system's response, including the reporting of the incident, investigation of the case, location and recovery of the child, and criminal prosecution of the abductor(s). The site visits provided insight into various aspects of unique programs, and the national survey and case file reviews attempted to identify those characteristics that resulted in an enhanced system response. Based on these findings, the researchers developed recommendations for statutory, policy, and programmatic change. The study described in this Bulletin concluded in 1996 and is based on parental abduction data from 1992 to 1996. Nevertheless, the study findings and recommendations continue to be relevant to current incidents of parental abduction. OJJDP has chosen to highlight the findings of this study because, to date, this is one of the most comprehensive studies of the Nation's criminal justice system's response to the crime of parental abduction.

## Phase 1: Findings From the National Survey

### Methodology

All law enforcement agencies and prosecutors serving a nationally representative sample of 400 counties were surveyed about their handling of parental abduction incidents occurring in 1992. In all, 400 prosecutors' offices, 405 county law enforcement agencies, and 3,625 municipal law enforcement agencies were surveyed. Two questionnaires, one to be filled out by law enforcement agencies and the other by prosecutors, were mailed to the offices of sheriffs, police, and prosecutors in the selected jurisdictions.

Because of a series of followup mailings and other reminders to survey participants, the response rate was excellent for a mail survey. Overall, 76.6 percent of the law enforcement agencies completed the survey, 4.7 percent were found to be ineligible because the agencies did not have jurisdiction to conduct criminal investigations of parental abductions, and only 0.5 percent directly refused. Three-quarters (75 percent) of sampled prosecutors completed the survey, with 2.5 percent declining to participate and 22.5 percent not responding at all.



### National Estimates of Reports, Arrests, and Prosecutor Actions

Law enforcement agencies and prosecutors reported the following for 1992:

- ◆ An estimated 30,500 parental abduction cases were reported to law enforcement agencies. In 82 percent of these cases, a parent was responsible for the abduction; in 12 percent, a family member other than a parent was the abductor; and in 6 percent, nonfamily members were the perpetrators.
- ◆ Approximately 4,500 cases of parental abduction—only 15 percent of all reported cases—resulted in arrest.
- ◆ A higher number of cases were referred to prosecutors than the 4,500 resulting in arrest. Law enforcement agencies referred about 9,200 parental abduction cases (30 percent of all reported cases) to prosecutors.
- ◆ An estimated 15,000 parental abduction cases were formally opened by prosecutors. This number is substantially higher than the number of referrals to prosecutors' offices by law enforcement agencies (9,200), implying that many parental abduction cases reach these offices by other referral routes, such as through the courts or directly from the aggrieved custodial parent.
- ◆ Criminal charges were filed in only an estimated 3,500 (23 percent) of the 15,000 cases opened by prosecutors. Of the cases in which charges were filed, 31 percent were dismissed and 49 percent resulted in convictions.
- ◆ Only 17 of the 400 counties surveyed reported that their prosecutors' offices filed more than 15 criminal complaints in 1992. Only 8 of these 17 counties were outside of California.

### Relation to NISMART Estimates

The most comprehensive study of the extent of parental abduction is the National Incidence Studies on Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children in America (NISMART)<sup>2</sup> (Finkelhor, Hotaling, and Sedlak, 1990). Conducted in 1988, this nationwide telephone household survey produced estimates of the number of

family abductions (to both domestic and international destinations) nationwide. Cases identified in NISMART are categorized as either "broad scope" or "policy focal":

- ◆ **Broad-scope cases.** These are cases in which a family member either (1) took a child in violation of a custody agreement or decree or (2) failed to return or give over a child at the end of a legal or agreed-upon visit (in violation of a custody agreement or decree) and the child was away at least overnight. NISMART researchers estimated that 354,100 children experienced an abduction under this definition. This category included most cases that would be considered abduction under even the broadest statutes and also many in which law enforcement agencies and prosecutors would not be involved (either because of more stringent legal definitions or by discretion).
- ◆ **Policy-focal cases.** These are cases that fit the broad-scope definition but also have at least one of the following characteristics: (1) an attempt was made to conceal the taking or whereabouts of the child and prevent contact with the child, (2) the child was transported out of State, or (3) evidence existed that the abductor intended to keep the child indefinitely or to permanently affect custodial privileges. About 46 percent (163,200) of the broad-scope cases fell within this narrower definition (Finkelhor, Hotaling, and Sedlak, 1990).

The national estimates of reports of parental abduction to law enforcement agencies in the present study include only cases for which law enforcement officially took a report (30,500) or for which prosecutors' offices officially opened a case (15,000). These figures are substantially lower than the estimated number of family abduction cases reported in the 1990 NISMART study. Figures from both studies appear equally valid in their own right. Possible explanations for the discrepancy between the two studies include:

- ◆ Classification of the crime within the system not readily identifiable. For example, a violation of a custody order may not be distinguishable in the system from a violation of any other court order.

- ◆ Failure to report parental abductions that occur in concert with other crimes. For example, police may record other crimes, such as assault and battery or breaking and entering, and only mention the parental abduction in the narrative of the report.
- ◆ Lack of jurisdiction by some law enforcement agencies to conduct criminal investigations on parental abductions.
- ◆ Informal handling of cases by both police and civil attorneys to return the child to the custodial parent.

### **Case Characteristics Influencing Law Enforcement and Prosecutor Processing**

The following three factors were most frequently cited by law enforcement agencies as influencing their decision to take a report of an alleged parental abduction:

- ◆ The existence of a custody order (60.1 percent).
- ◆ The endangerment of a child (52.1 percent).
- ◆ Joint custody (50.3 percent).<sup>3</sup>

Two of these factors—endangerment of the child and existence of a custody order—were also among three of the most commonly cited factors determining investigative priority (70.9 and 51.9 percent, respectively). The other most frequently reported factor was the child's disability status, cited by 65.7 percent of agencies.

The most common factors influencing whether a prosecutor's office opened a case were the existence of a custody order (70.6 percent), joint custody (62.8 percent), and endangerment of a child (62.2 percent). Regarding whether a case was actually prosecuted (i.e., filing of a criminal complaint), the three most common factors influencing this decision were the existence of a custody order (77.0 percent), the length of time the child had been gone (68.0 percent), and joint custody (66.9 percent).

### **Agency Characteristics and Resources**

The majority of law enforcement agencies reported that they did not have written policies and procedures governing parental abduction cases (69 percent), that they did not receive formal training on the handling of parental abduction cases (63 percent), and that they were not aided by a computerized MIS in providing

information on the number of parental abduction cases reported to their agencies (69 percent). Only 10 percent of the law enforcement agencies indicated that they had specialized programs designed to address parental abduction in their jurisdictions.

The survey of prosecutors produced similar findings. The vast majority stated that they had not been aided by a computerized MIS in providing survey information (85 percent), that they did not have policies or written guidelines on the handling of parental abduction cases (86 percent), and that staff did not receive formal training on parental abduction (86 percent). Seventy-nine percent of the prosecutors' offices indicated that they did not have specialized parental abduction programs.

### **Phase 2: Findings From Site Visits**

In 1994, project staff conducted extensive interviews with individuals familiar with the criminal justice system's processing of parental abduction cases in six counties of varying sizes and attributes: Escambia County, FL; Hudson County, NJ; Pima County, AZ; Salt Lake County, UT; San Diego County, CA; and Snohomish County, WA. The primary purposes of the site visits were to examine how law enforcement agencies respond to parental abduction reports and to identify unique case-handling practices.

Sites were selected based on the results of the national survey. The sites were chosen for their geographic diversity and met the following criteria:

- ◆ The prosecutor's office in the county had filed at least 15 criminal custodial interference complaints in 1992.
- ◆ Agencies in the county used MISs for individual case tracking.

At the time of site selection, it was determined that the filing of a relatively high number of criminal complaints (in this case, 15 or more) was one indicator of an enhanced law enforcement response to the crime of parental abduction.

### **Parental Abduction as a Case-Handling Priority**

With the exception of the San Diego County District Attorney's and Hudson County Sheriff's Offices, all criminal justice agencies reported that parental abduction cases constituted only an

estimated 1 to 5 percent of their workload. Some perceived parental abduction cases as "low priority" given their agencies' limited staffing and the high volume of other cases they were assigned to handle. This did not mean, however, that personnel in these offices had not developed some expertise in the handling of parental abduction cases. For the most part, these experts were detectives assigned to the departmental unit responsible for the investigation of child abuse, parental and stranger abductions, and runaway youth.

At sites where agency staff had developed expertise in parental abduction or a specialty unit had been created, such as in Hudson and San Diego Counties, it was clear that the initiative of skilled and concerned staff contributed to an enhanced criminal justice system response. However, specialized systems were not always institutionalized within an agency and might not exist if specialized staff were no longer employed by that agency. Of the 12 sheriff's offices and police departments contacted, only 5 had written policies governing the processing of parental abduction cases. San Diego County was the only site where a specific criminal justice agency, the District Attorney's Office, was mandated by law to intervene in a case of parental abduction.

### **Case Processing and the Impact of Court Orders on Police Action**

With the exception of Utah, the States visited were governed by laws that could be interpreted to prohibit custodial interference both before and after the issuance of a custody order.<sup>4</sup> Statutes in California, Florida, and Washington expressly outlawed custodial interference prior to the issuance of a custody order. Although Arizona's statute was less clear as to whether intervention is authorized before a custody order is granted, the Pima County prosecutor's office interpreted case law as allowing intervention in such cases. In Hudson County, NJ, despite the statute's lack of clarity, law enforcement officials reported that they would, at a minimum, investigate a complaint of parental abduction to ensure that the child was safe and at the same time refer the aggrieved parent to the family court to obtain a custody decree.

Generally, law enforcement personnel in these six States responded to some degree to a complaint of parental abduction, even when an aggrieved party did

not have a custody order. In at least three jurisdictions visited, the degree of response (e.g., patrol officer sent to scene, followup contact with involved parties) varied, depending on whether a court order existed or whether a child was at risk of harm. In the other three counties, a governing custody order had no impact on the degree of response because a patrol officer was automatically dispatched to the scene or an investigation was conducted to verify the legitimacy of a complaint. At a minimum, in all sites, even if no court order existed, police would travel to the scene of the complaint to assess a child's well-being and, at the same time, refer parties to local civil courts, legal services or pro bono programs, or the private bar for assistance in filing a petition for custody.

### Visitation Interference

Visitation interference, or denial of access, encompasses the situation in which a child's legal custodian prevents a parent or individual with court-ordered visitation from exercising those rights. Almost all the law enforcement agencies visited reported they would respond to complaints of visitation interference by sending a patrol officer to the scene or attempting to investigate the matter over the phone. Whether police enforced visitation orders depended on the specificity and clarity of the order. Also, not all responses to visitation interference reports were immediate, with some agencies believing that the interference should be of a "protracted" nature. The statutes of five of the six States visited prohibited interference with a visitation or access order. In three of these five States, violation of a visitation order could constitute a felony.

### Preparation of Crime Reports

In all jurisdictions, law enforcement personnel prepared a crime report upon receiving a complaint of parental abduction. Whether an incident of custodial interference would be labeled as such varied among jurisdictions. In some sites, a custodial interference offense could be classified as a "miscellaneous" offense, a "civil matter," or a related offense (such as domestic violence or assault).

### Entry Into the NCIC Database

The National Child Search Assistance Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. § 5780) requires that State and local law enforcement agencies take a report on a missing child and enter



descriptive information on that child into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database without a waiting period, regardless of whether the abduction constitutes a criminal violation. The Federal Missing Children's Assistance Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. § 5772(1)(A) and (B)) provides that for purposes of NCIC entry, a "missing child" is defined as

any individual less than 18 years of age whose whereabouts are unknown to such individual's legal custodian if—

(A) the circumstances surrounding such individual's disappearance indicate that such individual may possibly have been removed by another from the control of such individual's legal custodian without such custodian's consent; or

(B) the circumstances of the case strongly indicate that such individual is likely to be abused or sexually exploited. . . .

Agency personnel reported varying practices as to the entry of information on parentally abducted children and perpetrators into the NCIC database. It was the practice in some jurisdictions not to enter information on a parental abduction case unless the child's whereabouts were "unknown," an arrest warrant had been issued, or the abductor had fled out of State.

### Contact With the Federal Bureau of Investigation

Pursuant to the Parental Kidnapping Prevention Act of 1980 (28 U.S.C. § 1738A), the FBI is authorized to investigate cases in which children have been abducted by

parents or their agents across State lines or out of the country. In these cases, State or local law enforcement authorities would seek the issuance of a Federal Unlawful Flight to Avoid Prosecution (UFAP) warrant to enable the FBI to investigate a fugitive parent's whereabouts.

The majority of law enforcement personnel reported minimal contact with the FBI. They related that the FBI was involved in only a few or none of their cases, and their comments reflected a possible underuse of FBI resources. One respondent recommended that the FBI become more involved with case investigation once a UFAP warrant had been issued and noted a lack of followup on the FBI's part. Another perceived the FBI as "jumping" on a case quickly if a child were taken out of State. Several viewed their working relationship with the FBI as "good."

### Use of State Missing Children's Clearinghouses

All States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico now have State missing children's clearinghouses. Depending on the jurisdiction, clearinghouses can have a role in educating the public on missing children's issues, can be instrumental in coordinating agency services aimed at child recovery, and, in specific cases, can provide assistance to law enforcement agencies in recovering children.

With the exception of personnel in three counties, investigators appeared to underuse State missing children's clearinghouses. These investigators seemed unaware of the existence of clearinghouses in their States or, if they were aware, did not convey to interviewers that they accessed clearinghouse services.

## Other Support Services

Agency personnel have had varying experiences with other support services. Most were not aware of or had never used the Federal parent locator service. Although the majority were familiar with the publications of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), it was less clear whether they were aware of NCMEC's training programs and provision of technical assistance in individual cases.

## Access to Prosecutors

All law enforcement agencies had 24-hour access to prosecutors who could advise them on relevant legal issues. In at least three jurisdictions, agency personnel had direct access to a prosecutor specializing in custodial interference cases.

## Involvement of Child Protective Services

At all sites, agencies maintained a policy that a referral would be made to the local child protective services agency in parental abduction cases in which a child was endangered or at risk of harm. In these cases, law enforcement personnel would have the authority to remove a child from a threatening situation.

## Training and Specialized Knowledge

With the exception of the sites that had specialty units (Hudson, Pima, and San Diego Counties), training on parental abduction issues was "on-the-job." In the jurisdictions that had formal training, the topics included Federal and State criminal custodial interference laws, the psychosocial aspects of the crime, written policies and procedures involving case processing, effective interventions, and the interplay between the criminal and civil systems in resolving custodial interference disputes.

Most of the personnel interviewed were knowledgeable about their State's criminal custodial interference laws. Sites with a large immigrant population—Hudson, Pima, and San Diego Counties—also had personnel familiar with the handling of international abduction cases. Personnel at these three sites were knowledgeable about the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Abduction and knew how to access the services of the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Customs Office, and the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service for assistance in locating the abductor and recovering the abducted child.

Prosecutors in Pima and San Diego Counties had become specialists in the field of parental abduction and were viewed as national experts. In the other four counties, although prosecutors were familiar with their State laws addressing criminal custodial interference, they had relatively limited experience with applicable State civil laws, primarily because they did not practice in civil or family courts and did not specialize in custodial interference. On-the-job training was the norm for prosecutors in these cases.

## Criteria for Filing a Criminal Complaint

In all jurisdictions, the number of criminal custodial interference complaints filed was quite low. For example, in San Diego County, where the District Attorney's Office received as many as 1,500 calls regarding custodial interference per year, only about 350 cases were formally opened and, of these, only an estimated 30 criminal complaints were filed each year. Most, if not all, prosecutors reported that prosecution may not be in a child's or family's interest and that the most important priority was to recover the child safely and expeditiously. The consensus was that prosecutors had to evaluate each case individually before initiating prosecution.

Typically, only custodial interference was charged in these cases. In two jurisdictions visited, prosecutors also filed charges of child endangerment, burglary, or assault related to domestic violence. Only Pima County actively prosecuted misdemeanor visitation interference cases through the county and city attorneys' offices.

The criteria for filing a criminal complaint varied between jurisdictions. The following factors were among those identified by prosecutors as influencing their decisions to prosecute:

- ◆ The child and/or abductor could not be located, or the abducting party refused to return the child.
- ◆ The custodial interference was for a permanent or protracted period (e.g., 2 to 3 months).
- ◆ The abductor crossed State lines or fled the country.
- ◆ A custody or visitation order had been violated.
- ◆ Evidence existed of repetitive criminal conduct on the part of the perpetrator.

## Extradition of Offender

In most sites, offenders were rarely extradited. One explanation was the expense involved in extraditing the abductor, especially if he or she were in a distant location. Extradition was more likely to occur in jurisdictions in which prosecutors' offices had a unit employing staff who specialized in parental abduction cases.

## Case Disposition

The majority of cases filed in all six jurisdictions resulted in plea bargains or dismissals. Individuals convicted of custodial interference usually received probation with conditions (e.g., they had to pay restitution to the victim, attend parenting skills classes, or stay away from the victimized child). Jail time was extremely rare. It appeared that defendants were incarcerated, either prior to or after a conviction, only when they refused to disclose a child's whereabouts.

According to prosecutors, parental abduction cases were rarely tried by a jury or judge. Three jury trials were reported, one in each of three sites in which case files were tracked. Bench trials (cases in which the judge determines guilt or innocence) occurred with some frequency only at one site that actively prosecuted visitation interference cases. Prosecutors perceive parental abduction cases as extremely difficult to try. Not only must they prove the elements of an offense, they must refute the defense that the abductor acted to protect the child from the other parent's alleged abusive behavior.

## Victim Advocacy Programs and Reunification Services

With the exception of Pima and San Diego Counties, victim advocates had a minimal role in assisting parents and children prior to and after a child's recovery. The victim witness advocate of the Pima County Attorney's Office and the investigation specialists of the San Diego District Attorney's Office have been instrumental in getting aggrieved parties access to civil court and legal services and providing assistance during the reunification process.

## Phase 3: Findings From Case File Reviews

In the study's third phase, the criminal justice system's response to parental abduction was further examined through a review of individual case files in three of the

jurisdictions visited during the study's second phase—Hudson, Pima, and San Diego Counties. Individual case tracking produced important findings on the processing of parental abduction cases through the criminal justice system and on case characteristics and their influence on case outcomes. It also corroborated many of the findings of the study's site visits.

Conducted in 1995, data collection involved abstracting information from existing paper and computer files in the sites' law enforcement agencies and prosecutors' offices. The final sample included 80 cases in Hudson County (62 from the Sheriff's Office and 18 from the prosecuting attorney's office), 96 cases in San Diego County (all from the District Attorney's Office), and 94 cases in Pima County (80 from the Tucson Police Department and 14 from the county attorney's office).

Figures 1–3 provide an overview of the characteristics and processing of these cases in the three jurisdictions. Researchers considered various characteristics to determine whether they were associated with the response to and outcomes of parental abduction cases—specifically, whether an arrest was made or arrest warrant issued and whether charges (felony or misdemeanor) were filed in criminal court.<sup>5</sup> Across all three sites, 74 complaints of parental abduction resulted in arrests or the issuance of an arrest warrant. Fifty of these complaints resulted in the filing of felony and misdemeanor charges.

Four of the twelve perpetrator characteristics examined were found to be positively associated with whether a case resulted in an arrest. That is, cases with the characteristic were more likely to result in the perpetrator's arrest than cases without it. These perpetrator characteristics are listed below:

- ◆ **Race/ethnicity.** Perpetrators identified as African American, Hispanic, or "other" were more likely to be arrested than white, non-Hispanic perpetrators.
- ◆ **Criminal record.** Perpetrators with at least one prior arrest were more likely to be arrested than perpetrators with no prior arrests.
- ◆ **Prior law enforcement incidents or complaints between the perpetrator and complainant.** A prior complaint involving law enforcement increased the likelihood of arrest.

- ◆ **History of drug and alcohol abuse.** Perpetrators with a history of drug and alcohol abuse, regardless of the source of that information, were more likely to be arrested.

Nine complainant characteristics were examined for their relationship with case outcomes. Four complainant characteristics were associated (either positively or negatively) with arrests or the issuance of an arrest warrant:

- ◆ **Relationship to the child.** Cases in which child protective services was the complainant were more likely to result in the perpetrator's arrest.
- ◆ **Criminal history.** Cases in which the complainant had a criminal record were less likely to result in the perpetrator's arrest.
- ◆ **History of domestic violence.** Cases in which the complainant had a history of committing domestic violence were less likely to result in the perpetrator's arrest.
- ◆ **History of mental illness.** Cases in which there was an indication of the complainant's past mental illness were less likely to result in the perpetrator's arrest.

One perpetrator characteristic, prior law enforcement incidents or complaints, was found to be associated with the filing of charges by prosecutors' offices. The complainant's history of committing child abuse was also associated with whether charges were filed in criminal court.

None of the characteristics associated with the abducted child (e.g., the number of children involved in the incident or the living situation of the child) was found to be significantly related to case outcomes. This may be attributable in part to the fact that the majority (60 to 78 percent) of cases in all three sites involved only one child.

Six incident characteristics were examined for association with case outcomes; three were found to be significantly related to arrests and arrest warrants:

- ◆ The use of a weapon or force.
- ◆ The return of the child to the left-behind parent.
- ◆ The removal of the child from the jurisdiction.

The perpetrator was more likely to be arrested or have an arrest warrant issued if a weapon or force had been used, the

child had been returned, or the child had been taken out of the jurisdiction during the abduction incident.

## Implications of This Study

Emerging from this study is a picture of a criminal justice system paying relatively scant attention to the crime of parental abduction. As reported in NISMART, an estimated 155,800 children are victims of serious parental abductions in the course of a year (Finkelhor, Hotaling, and Sedlak, 1990), yet research from this current study indicates that only 30,500 police reports are officially registered and only an estimated 4,500 arrests for parental abduction are made. Of parental abductions coming to the attention of prosecutors, only 9,200 cases are officially opened and only 3,500 criminal complaints are actually filed. Even allowing for the fact that a single reported case may involve the abduction of more than one child, these figures imply a very low response rate overall.

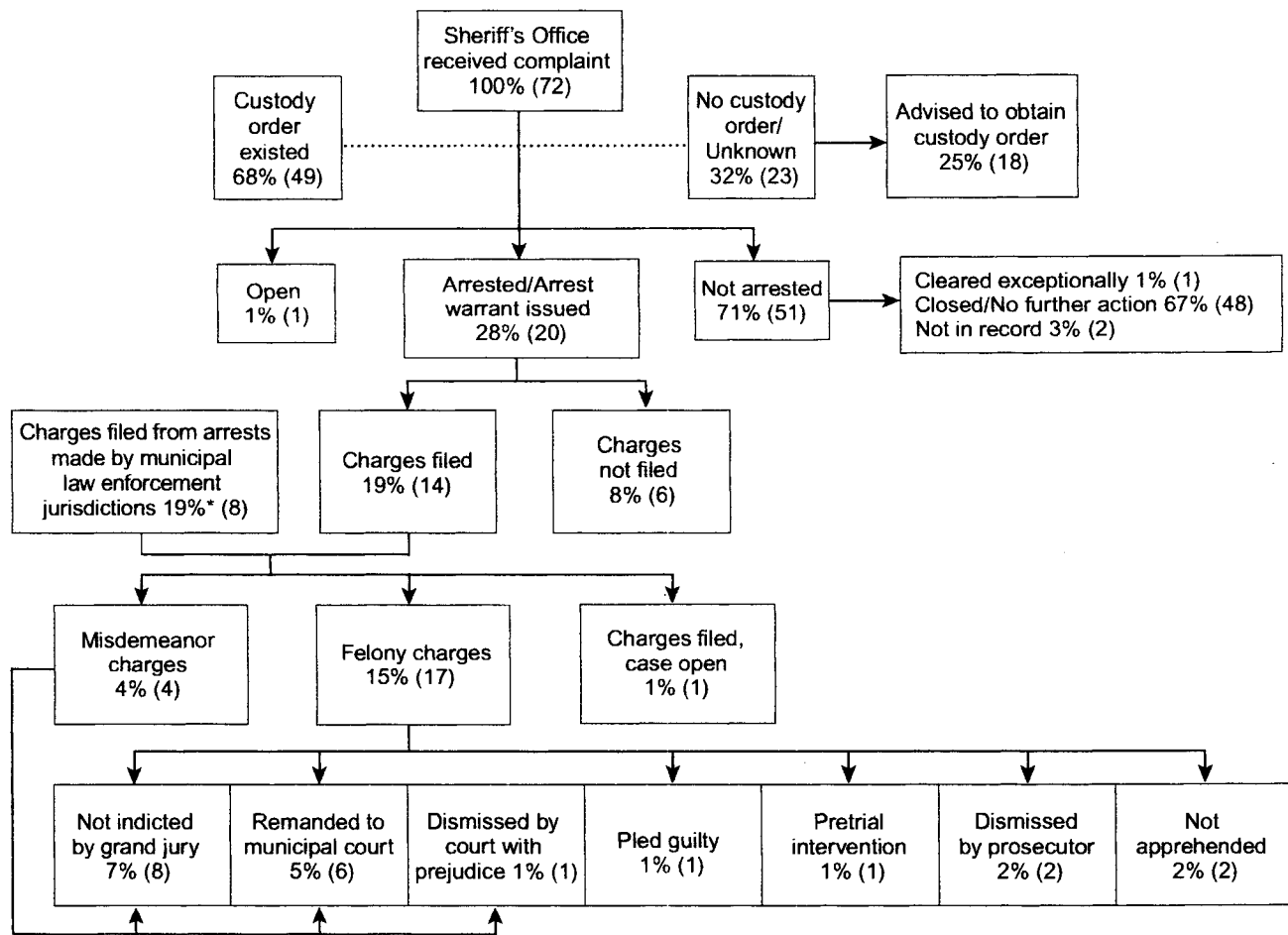
Although parental abduction is a crime in all 50 States and the District of Columbia, this study's findings reveal that criminal justice agencies have not implemented training and other programs that would educate their staff about custodial interference and enable them to respond more effectively. As stated earlier, this study's findings indicate that the majority of law enforcement agencies and prosecutors' offices do not have written policies and procedures governing the processing of parental abduction cases, do not train staff in how to respond to these cases, and do not have special programs designed to specifically address the crime.

However, it should be noted that during site visits, several jurisdictions were identified that have developed promising approaches to handling parental abduction cases. The characteristics unique to the majority of jurisdictions visited that contributed to an enhanced criminal justice response were the following:

- ◆ Statutory authority to intervene.
- ◆ Agency leaders and staff committed to combating parental abduction.
- ◆ Personnel who specialize in the handling of parental abduction cases.
- ◆ Coordinated agency response.
- ◆ Good agency management practices.



**Figure 1: Processing of Parental Abduction Cases in Hudson County, NJ**



Note: The number of cases is given in parentheses. Also, percentages through the charges-filed level are based on 72 Sheriff's Office complaints. After the charges-filed level, counts include charges filed from both municipal law enforcement and the Sheriff's Office ( $n=22$ ). Accompanying percentages are based on estimates of all complaints ( $n=113$ ) from both municipal law enforcement agencies and the Sheriff's Office. Percentages have been rounded.

\* This percentage is based on the estimated number of complaints received in municipal law enforcement agencies ( $n=41$ ), using the ratio of filed cases to complaints found in the Sheriff's Office.

- ◆ Access to supportive services (e.g., legal, family court, mediation, reunification, and visitation supervision services) for agency staff and left-behind parents.

The remainder of this section presents strategies and recommendations for legal, programmatic, and policy reforms to enhance the criminal justice system's response to parental abduction.

## Legal Reforms

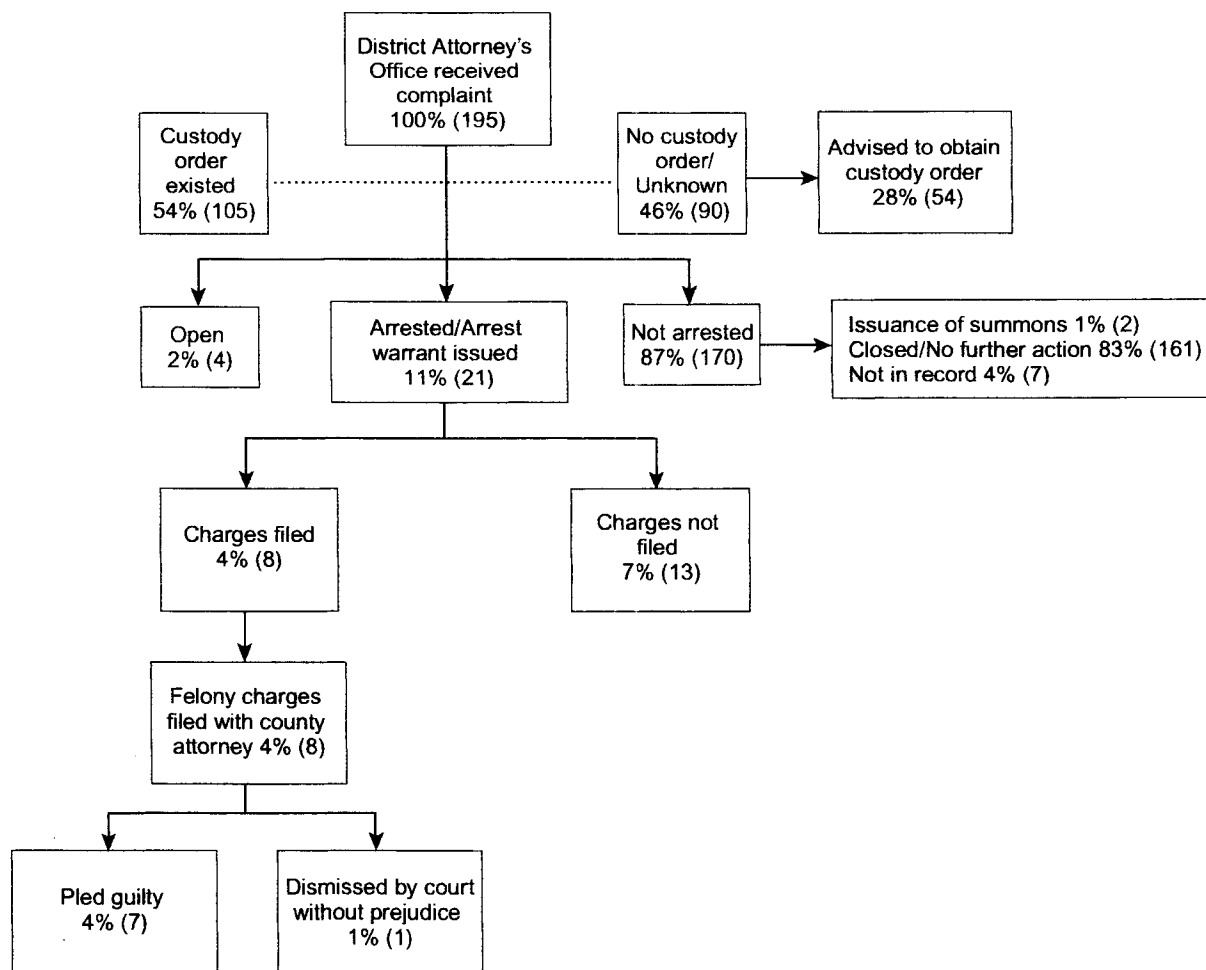
**Enact comprehensive criminal parental abduction statutes, such as the model Parental Kidnapping Crime Act.** The first step in implementing an enhanced law enforcement response to parental abduction is for a jurisdiction to evaluate its current State criminal statutes and case law relevant to this crime. If criminal justice agencies are to respond effectively to the crime of parental abduction, laws must support their efforts. Parental abduction will not become a law enforcement priority unless laws are enacted

that authorize law enforcement intervention and designate the offense a felony.

One model of a comprehensive and uniform parental abduction statute is the Parental Kidnapping Crime Act.<sup>6</sup> Those interested in enhancing their criminal justice system's response to the crime of parental abduction should review this model statute, carefully contrasting it to their State's existing statute. As indicated in its introduction, the "Act is intended as a substitute for existing laws that cover the issues addressed in [the] statute." The Act



**Figure 2: Processing of Parental Abduction Cases in San Diego County, CA**



Note: The number of cases is given in parentheses. Percentages have been rounded.

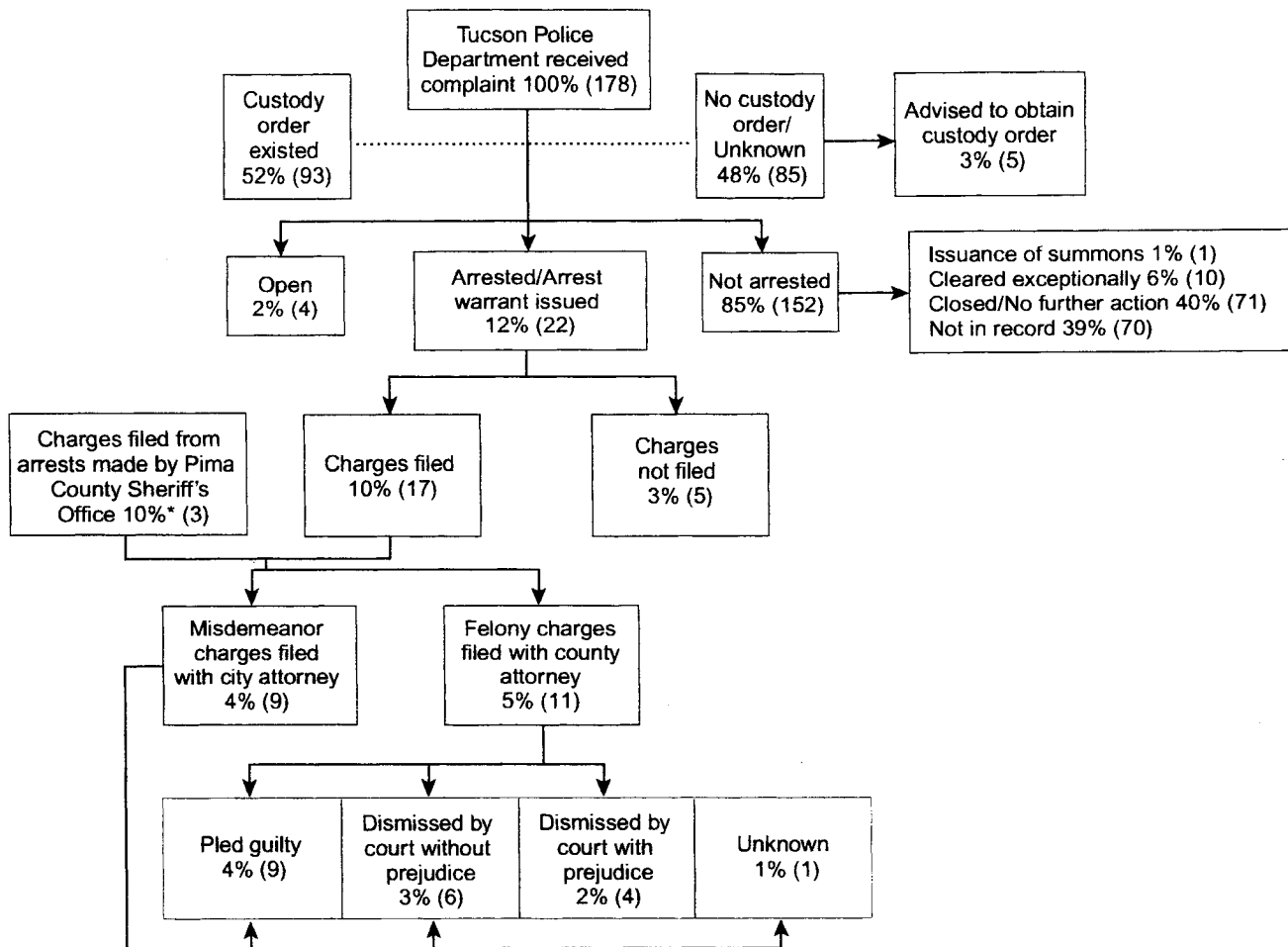
can also serve to enhance the effectiveness of those statutes that are already for the most part in conformity with it. The Act's primary goal is to produce statutory uniformity among States because

[a] uniform approach to the nationwide problem of parental kidnapping will send this message to parents: There is no safe haven for child abductors. Every State treats child abduction as a punishable offense according to the same terms. Faced with predictable criminal consequences for parental kidnapping, more parents are apt to seek civil solutions to their child custody problems, which is in the best interests of children. (Uthe, 1996:iii)

Briefly, the Act prohibits parental kidnapping that substantially deprives another of his or her right of custody or visitation whether a child has been removed from a particular State or a custody order has been issued. Of particular note to law enforcement personnel are provisions of the Act that authorize them to take a child into protective custody under specified circumstances, including if the child "reasonably appears" to be a missing or abducted child. These provisions also state that "[a] law enforcement officer and a prosecutor and his or her representatives shall not be liable for actions taken pursuant to this Act."

**Enact State statutes modeled after California's law and the Uniform Child-Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act that authorize prosecutors to investigate and prosecute custodial interference complaints, including filing pleadings in civil or family court proceedings necessary for the abducted child's recovery.** In addition to California Family Law Code §§ 3130-3134, Title II of An Act To Expedite Enforcement of Child Custody Determinations<sup>7</sup> addresses the role of prosecutors and law enforcement in taking civil action to enforce custody orders. For example, the Act provides among other things that law enforcement personnel are authorized to seek a court order granting them the right to take

**Figure 3: Processing of Parental Abduction Cases in Pima County, AZ**



Note: The number of cases is given in parentheses. Also, percentages through the charges-filed level are based on 178 Tucson Police Department complaints. After the charges-filed level, counts include charges filed from both the Tucson Police Department and the Sheriff's Office (n=20). Accompanying percentages are based on estimates of all complaints (n=209) from both the Tucson Police Department and the Sheriff's Office. Percentages have been rounded.

\* This percentage is based on the estimated number of complaints received in the Sheriff's Office (n=31), using the ratio of filed cases to complaints found in the police department.

temporary custody of a child in cases in which they would have to travel out of State to recover an abducted child and/or pick up an offender during extradition proceedings.

The Uniform Child-Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act, approved in 1997 by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws, contains very similar provisions. Section 315 gives prosecutors statutory authority to take any lawful action, including using a proceeding under the Act to locate a child, obtain the return

of a child, or enforce a child custody determination. The prosecutor may take action if there is an existing custody determination, a request from a court, a reasonable belief that a criminal statute has been violated, or a reasonable belief that the child was wrongfully removed or retained in violation of the Hague Convention. Section 316 authorizes law enforcement personnel to assist prosecutors in carrying out their responsibilities under the Act. States should consider adopting the Act, including these innovative provisions.

**Modify the Missing Children's Assistance Act of 1984 to ensure that information on all parentally abducted children is entered into the NCIC database immediately upon law enforcement's receipt of a report.** Site visits revealed that the Missing Children's Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. § 5772 (1)(A) and (B)) is generally interpreted to mean that if a child's whereabouts are known to the child's lawful custodian, information regarding the child and the abductor need not be entered into the NCIC database. However,

even in cases in which a child's whereabouts are known by the lawful custodian, there is always the serious risk that the abducting parent will flee, possibly immediately; will subject the child to abuse or neglect; or will be involved in other criminal conduct. Clarifying the Federal law (i.e., clarifying the definition of "missing child") so that information on all parentally abducted children is entered into the NCIC database will ensure that these entries are made more uniformly among States and will facilitate intrastate and interstate communication among law enforcement agencies. It will also enhance the ability of prosecutors who have or may acquire the civil authority to locate and recover abducted children pursuant to the aforementioned Uniform Child-Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act.<sup>8</sup>

### **Programmatic and Policy Reforms**

**Recognize that parental abduction is a serious form of child maltreatment and is a crime that must be effectively investigated and prosecuted.** Leaders of criminal justice agencies should advocate for sufficient staff, enhanced computer technology, and other resources so that staff are able to make the crime of parental abduction a case priority. Interviews conducted during the study's site visits revealed that criminal justice system personnel were overwhelmed with handling cases of serious violence and other crimes. Although those interviewed perceived parental abduction as a serious, criminal offense, they were also concerned that unless additional staff and other resources were provided, they would be unable to respond effectively. Several interviewees reported the need for sufficient and upgraded computer equipment and access to computer technologies that would allow them to connect quickly to data collection systems (e.g., Experian credit check and Data Quick) and expedite investigations.

**Develop and implement written policies and procedures addressing the handling of parental abduction cases.** To institutionalize practice and procedure and ensure a uniform, effective response to reports of parental abduction, it is imperative that State and local criminal justice agencies develop and implement policies and procedures specific to the processing of these cases. As a matter of good management practice, all personnel, including



supervisors and those on patrol, should be fully trained in and apprised of agency policies and procedures. Agencies should evaluate their existing policies and procedures on the general handling of missing children's cases to ensure that parental abduction issues are addressed. In addition, law enforcement personnel and prosecutors should assess the need for formal written protocols governing the appropriate transfer of cases for purposes of prosecution.

**Develop initial and ongoing training programs for all criminal justice system personnel on the handling of parental abduction cases, including the psychosocial aspects of the crime and the interrelationship of criminal and civil forums in resolving custodial interference disputes.** Educating all criminal justice system personnel, including patrol officers and management, about parental abduction and effective responses is essential to change the assumption that parental abduction is not a serious crime. The study's findings indicate that, with the exception of a handful of criminal justice agencies, most law enforcement personnel and prosecutors do not receive any specialized training on issues, policies, and procedures relevant to parental abduction. (The criminal justice system's current perception of this crime is very much like its view of domestic violence 5 to 10 years ago.) Briefly, all agency personnel should be familiar with Federal and State criminal parental abduction laws, the psychosocial aspects of the crime, any written policies and procedures addressing case processing, effective interventions, the interplay between the criminal

and civil systems in resolving custodial interference disputes, and community and other support services (e.g., mediation, family court, and legal services programs) that may complement law enforcement interventions.<sup>9</sup> In addition, to ensure uniformity among the States in the use of NCIC, all law enforcement personnel should receive concerted training on the appropriate and expeditious entry of abduction reports into the NCIC database. Given time constraints for staff training and the number of subjects that must be covered, it may be appropriate to incorporate specialized training on parental abduction and visitation interference concerns into already existing domestic violence and child abuse training. Management and staff should explore the possibility of obtaining technical assistance from the following: the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Missing and Exploited Children's Training and Technical Assistance Program.<sup>10</sup>

**Establish specialized units made up of law enforcement personnel and prosecutors skilled in investigating and prosecuting the crimes of parental abduction and visitation interference.** Given the complexity of case investigations and recovery efforts and the experiences of criminal justice personnel in Hudson, Pima, and San Diego Counties, agencies should seriously consider establishing sufficiently staffed specialty units to allow for a coordinated and expert response to reports of parental abduction. Patrol officers and line staff still need to be

knowledgeable about the issues, but staff specialists can more effectively follow up with necessary investigations, assess the appropriateness of law enforcement interventions, access suitable support services, and ease the burden on line officers in resolving custodial interference complaints. These specialists need not be limited to handling only custodial interference cases, especially in jurisdictions that may not have a high number of such cases. Agencies are encouraged to designate two or more staff members who would be comprehensively trained in all aspects of handling parental abduction cases and, at the same time, be assigned other types of cases. A preferred staffing model would be one such as the Family Protection Division of the San Diego District Attorney's Office, which handles not only custodial interference but also child abuse and domestic violence cases.

**Consider establishing local law enforcement missing children's clearinghouses.** Local law enforcement agencies should collaborate more effectively with their State missing children's clearinghouses. In conjunction with this, consideration should be given to establishing local missing children's clearinghouses within counties to allow for expert, coordinated responses to parental abduction reports. One model for this approach could be that used in Hudson County, where a number of municipal police agencies refer parental abduction cases to the Sheriff's Office, a county agency that employs staff specialized in the handling of such cases. Recognizing that this type of coordination might not be easy to accomplish, given agencies' individual priorities and interests, those interested in pursuing such coordination should keep in mind that this approach could be cost effective and ease the burden on municipal police departments in investigating parental abduction cases.

**Develop and implement written interstate and intrastate protocols for handling cases that involve the investigation and/or prosecution of parental abduction in more than one State or within more than one municipality in a State.** Criminal justice agencies, especially those located in neighboring jurisdictions, should examine whether interstate and intrastate written protocols need to be developed to reduce the chances that jurisdictional disputes related to agencies' responsibilities will arise during case investigation and prosecution. For example, in the Nation's Northeast corridor, which is made up of

several large metropolitan areas, parental abductions could easily result in the crossing of State lines. If a kidnapped child were taken from the District of Columbia to Maryland, would Maryland law enforcement agencies have a responsibility to assist in investigating the child's whereabouts and, if so, what would be the level of assistance? Questions like these could be answered in interstate and intrastate written protocols.

**Clarify the role of the FBI in investigating cases of parental abduction and actively seek the FBI's assistance in appropriate cases.** This study found that the FBI may not be as actively involved as it might be in identifying the whereabouts of abductors.<sup>11</sup> Criminal justice system personnel may be unaware of the role the FBI can play in investigating these cases, and State and local law enforcement personnel may be concerned about sharing investigative responsibilities. Information on the FBI's role in handling parental abduction cases needs to be disseminated through training and other programs to State and local law enforcement personnel and the general public.<sup>12</sup> In addition, Federal law enforcement authorities' handling of parental abduction cases warrants further study, including assessing the extent of their involvement in investigating abductions pursuant to the Fugitive Felon Act and investigating and prosecuting international abductions pursuant to the International Parental Kidnapping Crime Act.

**Learn about State missing children's clearinghouses, work with them to improve coordination and use of services, and advocate for enhanced clearinghouse funding.** Given the low priority that most law enforcement agencies place on parental abduction cases and the general lack of knowledge about the crime and its handling, it is not surprising that missing children's clearinghouses may be underused and, consequently, underfunded. This study revealed the need for enhanced communication between local law enforcement staff and State clearinghouses so that agencies can better understand a clearinghouse's role in providing technical assistance. Police need to be better informed of their State's clearinghouse operations and should know how to access its services. Collaboration between clearinghouses and local law enforcement is essential if the clearinghouses are to provide the services most useful to law enforcement.

**Advocate for the development and continuation of support services that are instrumental in preventing and resolving custodial interference disputes and that complement criminal justice system intervention.** Criminal justice system personnel who are in a position to advocate for enhanced support services should seek to develop and maintain cost-effective support services that can prevent abductions and can provide children and their families greater access to civil forums to resolve custodial interference disputes. This support can include legal services and self-help legal programs, family court services, mediation, supervised visitation programs, and educational forums on parental abduction issues. Moreover, serious thought should be given to appointing independent counsel for children in civil proceedings and developing programs to assist in the reunification of children with their parents. Support services offered in both civil and criminal arenas can be instrumental in reducing the need for criminal justice system intervention and the risk of trauma to the abducted child.

## Conclusion

Throughout this study, several individuals, including project staff and those in the field, commented that in addressing the problem of parental abduction, the focus on the child as victim is often lost. Criminal parental abduction statutes, for instance, speak in terms of one parent depriving the other of his or her child. As a result, the parent, not the child, becomes the aggrieved party. Similarly, the child's point of view is too often overlooked in these cases, especially if the child's whereabouts are unknown. Unlike other types of child maltreatment cases, in parental abduction cases, investigators often do not have direct contact with the child. As a result, though unintentional, the child's interests, in contrast to his or her parents', may become secondary.

Criminal justice leaders, legislators, and others in a position to support and implement specialized programs of intervention must be reminded that parental abduction can be a form of serious child maltreatment and is a crime in all 50 States and the District of Columbia. Many children will benefit if the criminal justice system carefully considers this study's findings and recommendations and begins to perceive this crime as harmful to the well-being of children and their families.

## For Further Information

Additional information about parental abduction is available from the organizations listed below. Brief descriptions of selected publications available from each organization are also provided.

### Organizations

**Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)**  
Child Protection Division  
202-616-3637  
202-353-9093 (fax)  
ojjdp.ncjrs.org

**National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)**  
703-274-3900  
703-274-2222 (fax)  
missingkids.com

**National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse (NCPCA)**  
703-739-0321  
703-549-6259 (fax)  
ndaa-apri.org/apri/NCPCA/Index.html

**American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law (ABA CCL)**  
202-662-1720  
202-662-1755 (fax)  
abanet.org/child

### Publications

**OJJDP.** The following documents are available from OJJDP (see Publications on its Web site or call the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse at 800-638-8736) or from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (visit ncjrs.org or call 800-851-3420).

*Addressing Confidentiality of Records in Searches for Missing Children* (NCJ 155183). This Report makes recommendations concerning law enforcement agencies' access to records maintained by schools, hospitals, child welfare agencies, domestic violence shelters, and runaway shelters. The Report also covers information release procedures and includes a checklist for maximizing record access from service providers. The Report's appendixes contain additional information and other relevant statistical data on the confidentiality of records in searches for missing children, jurisdictions that allow record access or impose reporting requirements in missing children cases, and State laws affecting record access.

*Early Identification of Risk Factors for Parental Abduction* (NCJ 185026). This Bulletin presents the design and findings of four OJJDP-funded studies on preventing family abductions. The findings provide information regarding the risk factors associated with parental kidnapping and strategies that can be used to intervene with at-risk families.

*Family Abductors: Descriptive Profiles and Preventive Interventions* (NCJ 182788). This Bulletin describes preventive interventions, such as counseling, conflict resolution, and legal strategies, that seek to settle custody and access disputes for families identified as at risk for parental abduction.

*A Family Resource Guide on International Parental Kidnapping* (NCJ 190448). This guide presents practical and detailed advice about preventing international kidnapping and increasing the chance that children who are kidnapped or wrongfully retained will be returned. It provides descriptions and realistic assessments of the civil and criminal remedies available in international parental kidnapping cases, explains applicable laws and identifies both the public and private resources that may be called upon when an international abduction occurs or is threatened, and prepares parents for the legal and emotional difficulties they may experience.

*International Parental Kidnapping: A Law Enforcement Guide* (forthcoming). This guide provides practical information on the public and private resources and services that are available to assist law enforcement in international parental abduction cases. It explains applicable laws, defines agency roles and responsibilities, describes criminal and civil remedies, examines methods for prevention and interception, and discusses important issues and procedures to be addressed during an international parental abduction case.

*Issues in Resolving Cases of International Child Abduction* (NCJ 182790). This Report documents a lack of uniformity in the application of the Hague Convention across countries. It includes case histories, survey findings on left-behind parents, selected practices in international family abduction cases, and recommendations for the judicial and legal systems.

*Issues in Resolving Cases of International Child Abduction by Parents* (NCJ 190105). This Bulletin provides an overview of the

major survey findings, selected good practices, and recommendations from the *Report Issues in Resolving Cases of International Child Abduction*.

*Obstacles to the Recovery and Return of Parentally Abducted Children* (Report: NCJ 144535; Research Summary: NCJ 143458). These publications present the results of a 2-year study of the legal, policy, procedural, and practical obstacles to the location, recovery, and return of children abducted by a noncustodial parent. They include recommendations to overcome each obstacle and extensive appendixes that describe the pros and cons of existing legal procedures for enforcing a custody order, sample forms to be used with existing legal procedures, and summaries of both civil and criminal appellate decisions.

*Parental Abduction: A Review of the Literature* (Available online only: ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/missing.html#186160). This online resource summarizes current research and literature related to the primary issues involved in parental abduction.

*Prevention of Parent or Family Abduction Through Early Identification of Risk Factors* (NCJ 182791). Based on analyses of data from several California studies related to child abductions by a noncustodial parent, this Report outlines a set of characteristics of parents who abduct their children and presents indepth socio-demographic and legal information about the families of abducted children.

*Using Agency Records To Find Missing Children: A Guide for Law Enforcement* (NCJ 154633). This Summary focuses on procedures for obtaining and using the records of certain types of human service providers to find missing children. It examines the use of, access to, barriers to, and limitations of records from schools, medical care providers, runaway shelters, and domestic violence shelters.

*When Your Child Is Missing: A Family Survival Guide* (NCJ 170022; Spanish Version: NCJ 178902). This guide, written by parents and family members who have experienced the disappearance of a child, explains how parents can best participate in the search for a missing child. It discusses the parents' relationship with law enforcement, examines issues related to the media, and presents practical information about distributing fliers and photos, organizing volunteers, and managing monetary donations.

**NCMEC.** The following documents are available from NCMEC (see Education & Resources on its Web site or call 800-843-5678).

**Family Abduction.** This handbook guides parents through the civil and criminal justice systems, explains the laws that will help them, outlines prevention methods, and provides suggestions for aftercare following the abduction. It thoroughly details search and recovery strategies and contains advice for attorneys, prosecutors, and family court judges handling these cases.

**International Forum on Parental Child Abduction: Hague Convention Action Agenda.** This report details the findings of a forum held in September 1998 to study the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. It offers 12 action/agenda items to help strengthen implementation of the Hague Convention.

**"The Kid Is With a Parent, How Bad Can It Be?": The Crisis of Family Abductions.** This issue brief discusses the seriousness of the problem of family abduction, considers whether the problem is growing, and examines the challenges and opportunities this crime poses to policymakers.

**Missing and Abducted Children: A Law-Enforcement Guide to Case Investigation and Program Management.** This guide, authored by a team of 38 professionals from local, State, and Federal agencies, outlines a standard of practice for law enforcement officers handling several types of missing child cases, including runaways, throwaways, family/nonfamily abductions, and disappearances in which the circumstances are unknown.

**When Your Child Is Missing: A Family Survival Guide.** Also available from OJJDP; see above for description.

**NCPA.** The following documents are available from NCPA (see Publications on its Web site).

**Charging the Parental Kidnapping Case.** This monograph assists prosecutors in determining appropriate charges and sentencing recommendations. It notes that an aggressive investigative and prosecutorial approach sends the message that parental kidnapping is a serious crime with

serious consequences for both victims and abductors and recommends that prosecution should be seriously considered in every parental kidnapping case.

**Investigation and Prosecution of Parental Abduction, 2000** (Training Conference Notebook). This notebook contains training materials compiled for the 2000 NCPA Conference, Investigation and Prosecution of Parental Abduction.

**Parental Kidnapping, Domestic Violence and Child Abuse: Changing Legal Responses to Related Violence.** This monograph will assist investigators and prosecutors in developing appropriate responses to the interrelated crimes of parental kidnapping, domestic violence, and child abuse.

**ABA CCL.** The following documents are available from ABA CCL (see Issues/Parental Kidnapping on its Web site).

**Hague Child Abduction Convention Issue Briefs.** This 1997 material consists of four issue briefs that can help attorneys handle cases that fall under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

**The Hague Convention: A Curriculum for American Judges and Lawyers.** This 1997 publication explains how the Hague Convention can be used effectively within the United States in international parental kidnapping cases.

**Parental Kidnapping Prevention and Remedies.** This 1997 material is designed to help attorneys better understand parental abduction cases and applicable laws. It includes practical tips on protections that can be placed in child custody orders that may help prevent an abduction, tips that lawyers can give their parent clients, a review of possible legal actions that can be taken on parents' behalf, and governmental resources that can be used to help in these cases.

**Parental Kidnapping Law Reform Package.** This package, produced in 1996, contains three proposed State laws related to parental abduction that can be adopted by State legislatures. The laws are the Parental Kidnapping Crime Act, Missing Children Record Flagging Act, and Tortious Interference With Child Custody and Visitation Act.

## Endnotes

1. The study's findings and recommendations are discussed in greater detail in the project's final report, *The Criminal Justice System's Response to Parental Abduction: Final Report*, which is available from the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse (call 800-638-8736 or order online at [www.ncjrs.org/pub/order](http://www.ncjrs.org/pub/order)). Unless otherwise stated, legal and other research for this Bulletin was concluded in mid-1996. Readers wishing to rely on a particular legal reference should check the law itself to find accurate, updated language and citation information.
2. A detailed discussion of NISMART 2, which is currently under way, can be found in Hanson, L., 2000, *Second Comprehensive Study of Missing Children*, Bulletin, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
3. The survey instrument made the inquiry as to "whether . . . joint custody" was a factor in taking a report or influenced the investigative priority assigned to a case. Whether a court order was necessary to have "joint custody" was left to the interpretation of the responding agency.
4. The law mentioned in the section "Phase 2: Findings From Site Visits" was the law in effect at the time of the site visits and was current as of 1995.
5. Characteristics that were missing more than 30 percent of the data were eliminated from the chi-square analysis.
6. See Uthe (1996). The Act also appears in an appendix to *The Criminal Justice System's Response to Parental Abduction: Final Report* (see note 1).
7. The full text of the Act with commentary can be found in Volenik and Uthe (1993).
8. In accordance with NCIC 2000, technological capabilities are improving. As part of the improvement effort, guidelines are being developed and implemented. In light of this Bulletin's NCIC-related findings, the NCIC 2000 code for missing persons should state "parental abduction" rather than "noncustodial parent abduction." The present code is too narrow a construct because sometimes

custodial parents conceal children in violation of the other parent's visitation rights. Codes should also expressly allow entry of abducting parents who are missing into the NCIC database, regardless of custodial or criminal status. It is imperative that the proposed NCIC 2000 guidelines relative to parental abduction (interstate and international) be reviewed to ensure that they facilitate, not hinder, the identification and recovery of abducted children, regardless of whether a custodian, noncustodian, or other person abducts them.

9. See *Parental Abduction: A Review of the Literature* ([ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/missing.html#186160](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/missing.html#186160)) for more information about many of these topics. A description of this document can be found under "For Further Information."

10. The Missing and Exploited Children's Training and Technical Assistance Program, funded through a grant to Fox Valley Technical College and overseen by OJJDP's Child Protection Division, currently offers five different week-long training programs, including a program on Responding to Missing and Abducted Children.

11. In addition to the FBI, a number of other Federal agencies can be of assistance to criminal justice system personnel working on parental abduction cases. An excellent guide to this support is *Federal Resources on Missing and Exploited Children: A Directory for Law Enforcement and Other Public and Private Agencies* (3rd ed., May 2001), prepared by Fox Valley Technical College under a cooperative agreement with OJJDP. For further information on obtaining this document, call the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse at 800-638-8736.

12. In January 2000, the FBI expanded its Office of Crimes Against Children into the Crimes Against Children Unit (CACU). CACU is staffed by supervisory special agents and support professionals who focus on all crimes under the FBI's jurisdiction that in any way involve the victimization of children. The staff provide program management and fieldwide investigative oversight over these critical FBI operations. The mission of CACU is to provide a quick, effective response to all incidents under its jurisdiction, thereby increasing the number of victimized children recovered and reducing the number of crimes in which children are victimized.

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Other individuals involved with this research included Susan J. Wells, Ph.D., Patricia Hoff, Esq., Diane D. Broadhurst, M.L.A., and Lisa Altenbernd. Project Advisory Board members were Martha-Elin Blomquist, Ph.D., Judge Christopher Foley, and Janet Kosid Uthe, Esq.

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APPENDIX D

USDOJ Fact Sheet *The Missing and Exploited Children's Program*



# OJJDP FACT SHEET

May 2001 #16

## The Missing and Exploited Children's Program (Update)

by Cathy Girouard

Title IV of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, as amended, the Missing Children's Assistance Act of 1984, authorizes the Administrator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to coordinate the Federal Government's response to missing and exploited children and to establish a Missing and Exploited Children's Program (MECP). MECP is administered by OJJDP's Child Protection Division. Title IV authorizes funding for a variety of activities designed to meet the needs of missing, exploited, runaway, and throwaway children and their families. Activities include direct services, research and demonstration programs, and training and technical assistance for law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, schools, and communities. This Fact Sheet highlights new and updated MECP information, including programs and activities funded by OJJDP in the areas of direct services, training and technical assistance, capacity building, research, and interagency coordination.

### Direct Services

**The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC).** This OJJDP-funded national resource center and clearinghouse helps locate and recover missing children and prevents the abduction, molestation, sexual exploitation, and victimization of children. NCMEC operates a 24-hour toll-free telephone hotline for callers to report the location of missing children or obtain assistance when a child is missing. The hotline averages 587 calls a day. NCMEC also operates the CyberTipline, an online resource where people can report leads and tips about child sexual exploitation. To date, 2,612 cases have been referred to local law enforcement agencies via the hotline and CyberTipline. NCMEC also provides case management, analysis, and computer-enhanced age progression services to families and law enforcement agencies and collects and disseminates information regarding missing children cases.

**The Association of Missing and Exploited Children's Organizations (AMECO).** This alliance of 42 nonprofit organizations was created in 1994 through an OJJDP grant. Its purpose

is to support the efforts of groups that serve missing and exploited children, their families, and the community. AMECO has developed standard intake forms to report missing children and has created an interactive Web site with information on missing children.

**Project H.O.P.E.** The Help Offer Parents Empowerment (H.O.P.E.) project makes accessible mentoring and support services to parents whose children are missing, including runaways, those abducted by strangers, and victims of domestic or international parental abductions. OJJDP funds support services provided by parent volunteers who have experienced the disappearance of a child. Since the project began in 1998, approximately 50 parent volunteers have been trained to provide services, and more than 2,400 families and 2,600 children have been served.

### Training and Technical Assistance

**Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC).** In partnership with NCMEC and OJJDP, FVTC provides training and technical assistance to State and local agencies that serve missing and exploited children. Each year, FVTC trains more than 6,000 professionals in investigative techniques, interviewing strategies, comprehensive response planning, and case management. The training prepares participants to handle cases involving missing and exploited children, child abuse and neglect, and child fatalities.

**School Resource Officer Standards, Training, and Technical Assistance.** The Comprehensive School Safety Leadership Initiative, a new program designed and implemented by FVTC and NCMEC, trains school resource officers, superintendents, chiefs of police, and social service providers in the latest techniques for responding to incidents involving school safety, child exploitation, and child abductions.

**Law Enforcement Technology Assistance.** In Fiscal Year (FY) 2000, Congress appropriated funds for NCMEC to provide computers, modems, color printers, scanners, and digital video cameras to local law enforcement agencies to enable them to access the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI's) Law Enforcement

Online (LEO) Web-based communication resource. This technological support is intended to facilitate law enforcement's ongoing efforts to prevent abductions and intervene successfully in missing and exploited children cases.

## Capacity Building

**Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force Program.** In FY 1998, Congress funded OJJDP to create "State and local law enforcement cyber units to investigate child sexual exploitation." Currently, 30 regional task forces, supported by more than 110 law enforcement agencies, participate in this program, which provides forensic, prevention, and investigative assistance to law enforcement professionals, educators, prosecutors, families, and others concerned with child victimization issues. Training in the investigation and prosecution of online child pornography and child enticement cases is an integral part of the program. The ICAC Task Force Program Investigative Satellite Initiative (new in FY 2001) awards small, one-time grants to agencies that need training and equipment to fully investigate and prosecute such cases.

## Research

**FBI/Behavioral Characteristics of Offenders Who Abduct and Murder Children.** OJJDP provides funds to the FBI to interview offenders incarcerated for abducting and murdering children. Information provided by this research will help law enforcement better understand these offenders and develop strategies to prevent abductions, recover abducted children, and bring offenders to justice.

**Case Management of Abduction Murder Investigations.** OJJDP also funds the Washington State Office of the Attorney General to interview investigators, review case files in child abduction homicides, and identify the most effective investigative strategies and forensic techniques for these cases. To date, information from 44 States for 577 cases involving 419 killers and 621 victims has been assessed and entered into a searchable database available to law enforcement agencies.

**National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMAART II).** Under the Missing Children's Assistance Act, OJJDP sponsors national research on the problem of missing children. The first study, NISMAART I, was conducted in 1988 with results published in 1990. Through NISMAART II, the Temple University Institute for Survey Research will determine how many children are reported missing, victimized by strangers, abducted by parents, and recovered in any given year. The NISMAART II results are scheduled to be released by the end of 2001.

## Interagency Coordination

**Federal Agency Task Force on Missing and Exploited Children.** In May 1995, the Federal Agency Task Force on Missing and Exploited Children was created to identify gaps and overlaps in Federal resources and services for missing and exploited children and their families, and to recommend ways to improve services. This Task Force of 16 Federal agencies and NCMEC addresses broad coordination and policy issues and seeks to improve communication among Federal agencies.

## For Further Information

For further information about the Missing and Exploited Children's Program, call 202-616-3637 or visit the Internet at [www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/missing/index.html](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/missing/index.html). To access NCMEC's 24-hour hotline or CyberTipline, call 800-843-5678 or visit [www.cybertipline.com](http://www.cybertipline.com). To learn more about AMECO's interactive Web site, visit [www.amecoinc.org](http://www.amecoinc.org).

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